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JUNE 1956

No. 6

A Study of Hebrews 6:4-8

By HERBERT H. HOHENSTEIN

THE PASSAGE IN THE GENERAL SETTING OF THE WHOLE EPISTLE

ANY effort to determine the relationship of this passage to the entire epistle must necessarily consider both the occasion and the purpose of the letter. There is one outstanding theme, the finality and perfection of the Christian religion. Christ, God's Son, has come down to give the climactic and clearest revelation of the God in whose bosom He has lain and to redeem mankind to this God whom He reveals. He who would hear this final Word of God must hear it in the Son. Not to listen is to die. Yes, to grow cold in attention to that Word is dangerous, and if such a habit is not corrected, it can become fatal to that faith which alone maintains men in the right covenant relationship with God.

It is just this apostasy which seems to have threatened this letter's addressees. That is shown by the repeated warnings against unbelief, indifference, coldness, laxity in faith and faithfulness, which fall like hammer blows again and again throughout the entire letter (3:6; 3:14; 4:4; 10:23; 12:1; 12:3).

The peril of apostasy under the stress of persecution . . . indifference as to Christian faith . . . a sense of disappointment at the failure of the promises to reach fulfillment . . . the wearing out of the first enthusiasm. . . . For these and other reasons, sluggishness and indifference were creeping into the church, and a stirring declaration of the folly and the peril of such decline was urgently demanded.

The purpose of Hebrews was thus above all things a practical purpose. The cold and indifferent among those to whom this Christian leader writes, must be shamed out of their torpor and neglect, and roused to a new consciousness of the transcendent worth of that which they still possessed, but were likely to lose. This, and not their theological instruction, or adjustment to the

downfall of Judaism, is the idea which dominates every part of the letter, and it is this that explains the fact that admonition and practical exhortation are so constantly interwoven with teaching in the epistle. Hebrews is thus to be understood not as a treatise upon the relation of Christianity to Judaism . . . but as an impassioned oration, wholly centered upon recalling to steadfast devotion to Christ weary and wavering disciples.¹

Viewed in such a light, the passage under study and chapter 10:26-31 become the two most incisive warnings against the peril of apostasy and its fatal fruit of death beyond recall. For it is by portraying such a possible fall in such ghastly colors that the writer hopes to rouse the listless readers of his letter from their dullness and to inspire them to press forward away from the black pit of unbelief.

THE PASSAGE IN ITS IMMEDIATE CONTEXT

From chapter 4:14 through chapter 7 the writer develops the theme "Jesus the Great High Priest, His Person and Superiority." It would seem, then, that 5:11—6:20 is an extended exhortation to faith in, and faithfulness to, Jesus, the High Priest. We might consider 6:4-8 as the climactic warning of this larger exhortatory section. From 4:14—5:7 the writer takes great pains to bring out the surpassing greatness of Jesus as the perfect High Priest. He would like to develop the thought to an even greater degree, but he feels that it is impossible because of the dullness and the spiritual immaturity of his readers (5:11-14).

This lack of faith requires immediate remedial action. So it is that in a manner characteristic of the whole epistle, the writer ceases to teach and begins to warn and encourage.

He bids them, therefore, dismiss for the present the subjects which had engaged their attention when they were catechumens (6:1-3). . . . It was not his present purpose—it ought to be quite unnecessary now—to remind them once more of such rudimentary truths as the difference between faith and works; the distinction between Jewish ablutions and Christian Baptism; the meaning of imposition of hands; the truths of the resurrection of the body and the sentence of the world to come. They could not need such teachings as this—unless, indeed, they were in danger of apostasy. Of the peril of such apostasy he gives them the most solemn warning.²

Not only does the writer make it known that he will not "lay another foundation" of the beginnings of faith, he also states that such an act is impossible if this immaturity leads to apostasy. "The connection between this passage and the foregoing, therefore, is that to rest content with their present elementary hold upon the Christian truth is to have an inadequate grasp of it; the force of temptation is so strong that this rudimentary acquaintance with it will not prevent them from falling away all together, and the one thing to ensure their religious position is to see the full meaning of what Jesus is and does."³

The verses immediately following 6:4-8 present a decided contrast to the stern warning of vv. 4-8. The writer simply cannot bring himself to believe that those to whom he writes have fallen into such a fate. "Therefore he hastens to assure them that he cherishes hopeful thoughts of their present and future state, calling them, in this solitary instance, 'beloved,' as if to make amends for the severity of his rebuke, and declaring that he fully expects to see realized in their experience the better alternative of the foregoing contrast—fruitfulness connected with, leading up to, salvation—instead of the cursing and perdition appointed for the land that bears only thorns and thistles."⁴

It must be remembered, then, that the writer does not accuse the Hebrew Christians of the apostasy which he here depicts. His words are intended solely as a solemn warning against this very fall which he describes. For it is by this warning that he hopes to strengthen his readers' drooping hands and weary knees.

A STUDY OF THE PASSAGE ITSELF

For it is impossible to restore again to repentance those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have become sharers of the Holy Ghost and have tasted the sweet Gospel of God and the powers of the age to come and have fallen away, since they are crucifying to their own hurt the Son of God and are holding Him up to public shame. For land which has drunk in the rain that frequently falls upon it and bears fruit profitable to those for whose sake it is tilled receives a blessing from God. But should it bring forth thorns and thistles, it is rejected and near a curse, and its fate is fiery destruction.

V.4, γάρ. The word probably indicates that the writer's reason for neglecting the foundation matters of faith will now be given. Ἀδύνατον, "impossible!" The subject is ἀνακαινίζειν in v.6. The same word with the same strong emphasis is used by our Lord in Matt. 19:26 and in Mark 10:27. Standing at the beginning of the sentence, the word is singularly impressive. The writer desires to have his readers realize immediately the absolute and irrevocable apostasy he is about to describe. This is the key word of the entire passage. This is the word that creates the problem of interpretation. If its meaning could be legitimately toned down to "difficult," or "relatively impossible," the problem would, to a great extent, disappear. One must translate: "It is *impossible* to renew to repentance those who have once been enlightened, etc."

The question naturally arises: "Does the writer exclude even the power of God to restore repentance in the hearts of those whom he is about to describe?" The answer to this question will depend upon whether or not this passage should be taken as a parallel description of the unpardonable sin as it is presented in Matt. 12:31, 32; Mark 3:22-30; Luke 12:10. For if Heb. 6:4-8 is another picture of the sin against the Spirit, then the sin can never be pardoned. I shall discuss this problem more fully a little later. One point ought to be remembered, however. God's power is unbounded (Matt. 19:26; Mark 10:27; Gen. 18:14; Job 42:2). And, if He so willed, that limitless power could be applied in the case of these apostate Christians. The miracle of rebirth *could* take place again, but whether or not it will depends upon the patience of Him whose power is unbounded.

Ἄπαξ, "once," perhaps in this context, "once for all!" The word, as it is used in the epistle (9:7; 9:26; 9:27f.; 10:2; 12:26f.) seems to mark the completeness, the all-sufficiency, of the action which it modifies. In a remote way, the word might be taken with the following three participles.

Τοὺς φωτισθέντας, "those who have been enlightened." Grammatically, this and the next three participles are the object of ἀνακαινίζειν in v.6. Westcott feels that this construction is intentional. "The object is placed before the verb in order to fix attention upon the variety and greatness of the gifts which have been received and thrown away."⁵ Does the word as it is used here

refer to the fact of conversion or to the act of Baptism? Probably "those who have been enlightened" and "have fallen away" are the same as those who "sin willfully" after receiving "the knowledge of truth" and for whom there consequently "remaineth no more sacrifice for sins" (10:26). If this is true, then φωτισθέντας would probably refer to the "enlightened," the "converted," rather than to the "baptized."

The word is frequently employed in both the Old and the New Testaments (Is. 60:1; 60:19; Micah 7:8; 1 Cor. 4:5; Eph. 1:18; 3:9; 5:14; 2 Tim. 1:10), and throughout it apparently designates that act of God by which He enlightens men with the revelation of His redemption in Christ. One also is reminded in this connection of 1 John 1:5, where the Apostle tells us that "God is Light." Might we not say, therefore, that to be enlightened is to be filled with God Himself?

He who is enlightened is also enlivened. Compare John 1:4 and Ps. 36:9. The Incarnate Life is also the Light by which men come to see their own guilt, while at the same time they view the glory of a merciful God busily removing that guilt in the torments of His Son's Passion and the triumph of His resurrection. Light and life go together even as darkness and death. Conversion, therefore, is more than the enlightenment of a mind whose thoughts are misdirected toward the devil's dark world of deception and death. Conversion is not merely the setting straight of a misguided mind. Conversion is the resurrection of a corpse.

Another view contends that the word is probably a reference to Christian Baptism. "Die altkirchliche Auslegung bezieht φωτισθέντας (die *Erleuchtung* 6:4; 10:32) seit Justin auf die Taufe."⁶ Justin himself designates Christian enlightenment as a "lustral bath," a term which he directly applies to Baptism (Apology I 61.65). Though it is certainly possible that the writer of Hebrews had in mind the act of Baptism, such does not appear to be the case.

In the first place such an interpretation of the word is rather foreign to its general Scriptural usage. The LXX employs φωτίζω in the sense of "teaching," or "giving instruction" (Judg. 13:8; 2 Kings 12:2). And in the New Testament the baptismal view lacks definite evidence. Keil maintains: "Dieser Sprachgebrauch [to translate φωτίζω for "baptize"] ist dem Neuen Testament

fremd."⁷ Farrar (p. 383) also points out that the baptismal interpretation for φωτισθέντας was not common before its use in the passage before us and is therefore derived from its apparent meaning in Heb. 6:4.

The baptismal view had its serious repercussions in the early church. Both Montanists and Novatians seized upon this passage to justify their position of a demand for excommunication upon those who fell into grievous postbaptismal sins. For was it not "impossible to renew to repentance those who had once been baptized" after they had, perhaps, disavowed Christ in a moment of severe torture, in the pains of persecution?

The use of the aorist in this and the following three participles is significant. It seems to imply a certain definite finality in the events described. Also note the passive voice. This "enlightenment," whether it be conversion or Baptism, is *God's* act. It is in God's light, not his own, that man sees light (Ps. 36:9). There is no self-achievement here, no finding of knowledge by human power or pursuit. He who is "enlightened" is found by the Truth, and therefore should regard himself as one of the privileged poor, the illiterate bankrupts whom the Father has chosen to illumine (Matt. 11:27).

Γευσαμένους τε τῆς δωρεᾶς τῆς ἐπουρανίου, "and have tasted of the heavenly gift." To "taste the gift from heaven" is to possess it and to *experience* it in the fullness of its sweet and saving power. Compare 2:9, where Jesus is said to have "tasted death in behalf of everyone." Tasting the heavenly gift, then, involves much more than a passing touch of its blessing. It involves much more than just "catching the crumbs" which happen to "fall from the Master's table," the "leftovers" of His meat of mercy and love. Tasting the gift implies a happy and hearty feast upon that "living Bread which has come down from heaven." Cf. John 6:50-55. This is a keenly conscious tasting of the sweetness of the Lord's grace (1 Peter 2:3).

The correlation of the four participles is not easily determined. Is there co-ordination here or subordination? Are the last three participles to be taken as a further description of the first, or are they introducing new and separate facts of Christian experience? It is difficult to say. The meaning of the passage is not greatly

altered if one adopts any of the three possibilities suggested by Bishop Westcott (p. 147).

"The heavenly gift!" What does it signify? Buechsel in *Kittel* makes the following comment on the word: "In δωρεά liegt im N.T. immer die Gnade Gottes. . . . Es findet sich . . . im N.T. immer von der Gabe, die Gott bzw Christus den Menschen gibt."⁸ If we examine the word in the context of the epistle (5:1; 8:3; 9:9), we discover that it is used to describe the sacrificial gift which the priests of the Lord offered to atone for their own sins and for the sins of the people. Also in 11:4, the word δώροις seems to be parallel with the word θυσίαν, again indicating the close relationship between δωρεά or δῶρον and θυσία that existed in the writer's mind. Possibly for this reason Bauer proposes "Opfergabe" for δωρεά in 6:4.⁹ Certainly, in the context of the epistle, this "Opfergabe" might be Christ Himself.

If one is inclined to move in the thought world of John, then δωρεά has definite overtones of the Johannine concept of life. Here, too, one recalls that it is Jesus Himself who is God's gift of life to men (John 3:16; 4:10; 6:32f.; 14:6). If it is meant in this sense, then "tasting the heavenly gift" and "being enlightened" would be practically the same experience.

In the Book of Acts the "heavenly gift" is the Holy Ghost (2:23; 8:20; 10:45; 11:17). The whole New Testament consistently asserts that it is the Spirit who gives life. Syllogistically speaking, we could say: "Apart from the Spirit no man can confess Jesus as Lord (1 Cor. 12:3). Therefore apart from the Spirit there is no life, for Jesus is *the* Life." That makes the gift of heavenly life and the Spirit inseparable. The gift is life, the Giver is the Spirit, and, in a sense, the "Father of lights, from whom comes down every good and perfect gift" (James 1:17). Thus, to "taste the heavenly gift" involves a deeply absorbing experience with the Trinity itself. The "heavenly gift" is God Himself in the person of Christ descending upon His sin-ruined creation to effect its re-creation. And it is all a *gift*, "not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8, where God's gift equals salvation).

This gift of God is characterized as being τῆς ἐπουρανίου. According to Bauer (pp. 508, 509), the word has two basic ideas: (1) "That which is found *in* heaven or is realized or takes place

in heaven!" (2) "Things that possess characteristics of heaven, heavenly things!" The latter is the meaning Bauer prefers in the passage before us. He contrasts ἐπουράνιος with ἐπίγεια in John 3:12. Thus, "heavenly" describes that which is of the Spirit, that which is ἄνωθεν, in contradistinction to that which is of the flesh.

If we look at the word in the context of the letter (3:1; 8:5; 9:23), we discover that the author employs it to portray realities that belong to the eternal world, in contrast to that visible creation which is in chained subjection to the change of time and the corruption of death. It is a word that sets forth the things that are of God and therefore imperishable. Therefore that which is ἐπουράνιος might also be regarded as ἀληθινός. It is genuine; it stands; it endures. It is reality in its fullest sense. He who "tastes the heavenly gift" has become a δεύτερος ἄνθρωπος ἐξ οὐρανοῦ (1 Cor. 15:48), a man "begotten from above" and therefore "begotten of the Spirit" (John 3:3-6).

This gift is heavenly because it had its origin with God in heaven, has come down from heaven and mercifully met man's misery with the blessing of endless life, yet its full enjoyment must await the coming consummation in heaven. The use of the genitive is probably partitive. To feast in the fullest sense upon the marriage supper of the Son belongs to another order.

Καὶ μετόχους γενηθέντας πνεύματος ἁγίου, "and have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost!" The word μέτοχος is not very common in the New Testament, being found only in Luke 5:7 and in this epistle (1:9; 3:1; 3:14; 12:8). In the Luke passage it seems to be used substantively for "partner" or "comrade." That is also its meaning throughout the LXX. It is a word of dignity, and, as Michel (p. 148) points out: "μέτοχος kann sich im Hb. nur mit einer besonderen Würde, mit einer wichtigen Gabe verbinden." "Sharers of the heavenly calling" (1:9), "sharers of Christ" (3:14), "sharers of the Holy Ghost" (6:4) — think of the high privilege involved in such participation! The Christians pictured here had not only tasted well of the Gift, the Bread of Life; they had also been in intimate union with the Giver, the Holy Ghost. Once again we behold a Christianity that is deep and thrilling.

Westcott (p. 148) sees here a rather interesting development in the writer's thought. He proposes that "tasting the heavenly gift" might signify the intimate and individual union of the believer with His Lord. That would be the first aspect of enlightenment. But, through the participation of the Spirit, the believer is also introduced into a wider fellowship than that of his personal faith in Christ. He is placed into the fellowship of the Spirit, the body of Christ, the church. Cf. 1 Cor. 12:12, 13.

Καὶ καλὸν γευσάμενους θεοῦ ὄημα, "and have tasted the comforting word of God!" Again one notes the idea of a deeply personal experience as expressed in the verb γεύομαι. It is striking that the verb in this verse is used with the accusative, whereas in v. 4 it is employed with the more usual genitive. In the New Testament the genitive is the more usual case (Luke 14:24; Luke 9:27; John 8:52; Acts 23:14; Heb. 2:9); however, the accusative does occur also in John 2:9.

"Θεοῦ ὄημα wird hier als einheitlicher Begriff (ohne Artikel) gebraucht. Der Ausdruck *das gute Wort* (הַדְּבָר הַטוֹב) wirkt nicht nur in der LXX (τὸ ὄημα τὸ καλόν), sondern auch in den Targumin nach (Str.-B. III 690)." See Michel, p. 148. Bauer (pp. 1226f.) says the word can have one of three meanings. It can refer (1) to the "machtvolle Schöpferwort," the word of God's creative power (Heb. 1:3, 4); (2) to "alle seine Reden" (Luke 7:1); (3) to "words of Christian teaching or heavenly understanding" (John 5:47; John 6:63; John 12:47f.). It is in this last sense that the word seems to be used in the passage before us.

The adjective καλόν has a variety of meanings: (1) good or beautiful with respect to outward appearance (Luke 21:5); (2) good in the sense of being usable; (3) perfect, immaculate. Bauer (p. 665) proposes the third meaning for Heb. 6:5. If that is the case, then the joy of these onetime Christians lay in the fact that they had found God's Word to be the ultimate in every respect. It contained no impurities or imperfections. It was total truth, yet energized total truth! For God's Word is power and light and life. God's Word is fire and thunder and a sword (4:12, 13). God's Word is enacted judgment against men's sin, actualized grace to rescue men from that sin. God's Word is God's kingdom coming, God's will being done. Whether described as

ῥῆμα or λόγος, God's Word is always alive, quick, and powerful, since it is the very extension of Him who never rests.

As was pointed out, καλὸν θεοῦ ῥῆμα is the Septuagint translation for הַדְּבָר הַטוֹב, a phrase which occurs in Joshua 21:45 and Zech. 1:13 to signify the comforting and consoling words that fall from the lips of the Lord as opposed to those of judgment and fire. Thus the divine utterance which is καλὸν might be said to come from the Bridegroom God who speaks "over the heart," speaks "comfortably" to the pulsating heart of His trembling Jerusalem, His beloved bride (Is. 40:2). The Word that is καλὸν does not come from the "consuming fire" God of Sinai's thunderclouded crest. Rather, it comes from the uplifted countenance of the God who smiles upon us in mercy in the face of Jesus Christ. Not fire, but favor—that is the content of this "good," this "comforting" Word of God. And notice the prominent position of the adjective καλόν, immediately at the beginning of the phrase. Perhaps the writer is thereby attempting to bring out the surpassing sweetness of God's Gospel promises.

People who have "been enlightened, tasted the heavenly gift, been made sharers of the Holy Ghost, and tasted the good Word of God," must, of necessity, also experience "the powers of the age to come." For anyone who has been reborn "from above," anyone who has risen with Christ from the dark sepulcher of this perishing creation to become a new creature, will experience bolstering foretastes of this happy "age to come" even in the distressing pains of the age that now is. With the conception of Christ the ἔσχατον has begun; with the παρουσία will come its consummation. And here were these apostate Christians, here are we, living in the great "not yet" between these two events. Yet the facts of Christ's conception, Passion, resurrection, and ascension are in themselves God's unbreakable pledge of that coming consummation in which the present brief and fading foretastes of the "age to come" will give way to complete fulfillment. Then this painful tension between the tragedies we see and experience and the happiness we hope for will forever be resolved. Now our life is "hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3). But it is not completely hidden. The wrappings of time cannot entirely hide the happiness to be revealed in us. We are much like children who have seen

our father enter the home with our Christmas present tucked carefully under his arm. We are not quite sure just what it is, but we know it will thrill us with joy the moment we open it on Christmas morn. And the very anticipation sets our hearts throbbing with a kind of impatient excitement. We know the gift is ours, yet we must wait till Christmas until the full revelation and enjoyment. But the joy of Christmas is definitely projected into the pre-Christmas days of waiting and hoping. Even so the "powers of the age to come" project themselves into the pre-Parousia days of the Christian.

The genitive here is probably subjective, for it is this "future age," this "world to come" (2:5) which sends down these powers into the Christian's present problems, pressures, and pains. The word *δύναμις* occurs four other times in the letter (1:3; 2:4; 7:16; 11:11), and in all these instances it seems to be associated with a power that is derived from the all powerful God. In 2:4 these powers are regarded as the Spirit's confirmation of the validity of the Gospel message. The word *αἰών* occurs quite frequently in the epistle (1:8; 5:6; 7:17, 21, 24, 28; 6:20; 13:8), and in the majority of cases it seems to point up that which is eternal in contrast to that which is subject to the change of time and death.

There are some interesting interpretations of the phrase. Goodspeed (p. 60) believes that these "powers" have reference to the miracles which were "everywhere represented as attending the early acceptance of the gospel." The statement by Robinson deserves attention: "Here the writer seems to have in mind the assurance that the Christian has of a continued life with Christ, of a power which can annul death. All the other forms of experience are conditioned in one way or another by the physical, but the faith of one who *knows* Christ and has felt His saving power has passed beyond the bonds of this life and is already linked with the other. In a very real sense, the Beyond is already here for him."¹⁰

To know Christ is to experience Him in an intimate and personal way. It is to be known by Him, to be taken hold of by Him, to be made a "new creature" in His "new creation." In Baptism the Christian has actually been made a sharer in Christ's death, that is, he has once for all passed from the old aeon gov-

erned by that triad of terror — devil, death, and sin — and has been translated into the new aeon of that life both revealed and hidden in the Christ of God. It is Baptism that sets off the tension between the "now" and the "not yet," between "having begun" and "having arrived," in the life of a Christian. Yet, since he is in Christ, all that has happened to the Savior has already happened to him. In Christ *he* has died, *he* has been quickened, *he* has been made to "sit with Christ in heavenly places" (Eph. 2:4-6). Still, the new creature, although wholly redeemed from evil and recreated to God, is in birth pangs with the entire creation until he is freed from "the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God" (Rom. 8:21, 22). In this tension the Christian lives. Yet, to the extent that he is in Christ, he has indeed "tasted the powers of the age to come," and, as Robinson (p. 41) points out, the boundaries of death and time are dissolved in a present tasting of these powers as they "rise up amidst the chaos of the present."

St. Louis, Mo.

(To be concluded)

FOOTNOTES

1. Edgar J. Goodspeed, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1908), pp. 17 ff.
2. E. W. Farrar, *The Early Days of Christianity* (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., n. d.), I, 381 f.
3. James Moffatt, "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews," *The International Critical Commentary*, ed. Briggs, Driver, and Plummer (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924), XXXIX, xxxii.
4. A. B. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), p. 218.
5. B. F. Westcott, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1950), p. 148.
6. Otto Michel, "Der Brief an die Hebräer," *Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament*, ed. Heinrich Meyer (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1949), p. 147.
7. Carl F. Keil, *Commentar über den Brief an die Hebräer* (Leipzig: Doerffling und Franke, 1885), p. 154.
8. *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1949), I, 674.
9. Walter Bauer, *Griechisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, 3d. ed. (Berlin: Verlag Alfred Toepelmann, 1937), p. 348.
10. T. H. Robinson, "The Epistle to the Hebrews," *The Moffatt New Testament Commentary* (New York: Harper Brothers, n. d.), pp. 66, 67.

The Lutheran World Federation

By GILBERT A. THIELE

EDITORIAL NOTE. This article on the origin and development of the Lutheran World Federation reproduces another chapter from the author's dissertation, submitted to the theological faculty of the University of Basel, Switzerland.

IN the years immediately after World War I, tentative attempts were made to establish contact for purposes of fellowship and understanding between European, North American, Asian, and other Lutheran bodies in the world. The first real meeting of representatives of Lutheran churches throughout the world took place in 1923 at Eisenach, Germany. Here 160 delegates from twenty-two nations met August 19—24, 1923, in order to explore and express their unity of faith and spiritual kinship. The way for this gathering and all that followed from it "was prepared by the General Evangelical Lutheran Conference, which, although at first confined to Germany, was even before 1900 extended to Scandinavia."¹ The Eisenach delegates decided there was need for a world organization and created the Lutheran World Convention. "In Eisenach in 1923 an organization was effected under the name of the Lutheran World Convention, uniting Lutherans on the doctrinal basis of the Holy Scriptures, the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, and Luther's Shorter Catechism."² They accepted the doctrinal statement which is now paragraph one in the constitution of the Lutheran World Federation.³

Between 1923 and 1929 developments continued to favor a growing feeling of fellowship among Lutherans in Scandinavian countries, Germany, the United States of America, Canada, Asia, and Australia. The Lutheran Church in Germany, as represented in the life of the theological faculties and its Church bodies, worked under a new system necessitated by the establishment of the Weimar

¹ *A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517—1948*, edd. Ruth Rouse and Stephen Charles Neill, London: SPCK, 1954, p. 615.

² Ibid.

³ *Proceedings of the LWF Assembly, Lund, Sweden*, Philadelphia: The United Lutheran Publication House, 1948, p. 126, hereafter referred to as *LR*.

Republic, in which the hereditary princes and nobility were no longer the *summi episcopi* of the various territorial Lutheran Churches. The American Churches that were represented at Eisenach continued to prosper and to grow in mutual understanding. The constituent bodies of the National Lutheran Council in the United States consolidated their work more and more. By the time the Lutheran World Convention met in 1929 at Copenhagen, Denmark, Lutheranism had begun to recover its strength and vigor after the severe setbacks of World War I.

The Lutheran World Convention at Copenhagen was larger than that at Eisenach. From June 26 to July 4, 1929, 147 delegates from twenty-one countries and one thousand unofficial delegates were present. The confessional declaration which was adopted at Eisenach was reaffirmed. (*LR*, p. 127.)

At Eisenach a furthering of Lutheran solidarity and the projection of a program of relief for the strengthening of weak and suffering Lutheran Churches throughout the world had been initiated. Copenhagen heard and approved the report on the implementation of this assignment by the executive committee and resolved: "In all its work of serving love the Lutheran World Convention and its committees shall, so far as the means are available, assist the needy and deserving Churches of the faith without respect to race, language, or political alignment" (*LR*, p. 127). In this resolution lies the basis for the vast program of relief and rehabilitation undertaken since World War II by the Lutheran World Federation, the eventual successor of the Lutheran World Convention.

In 1935 (October 13—20) the Lutheran World Convention met again, in Paris, France, where one would not expect to find a strong Lutheran representation. In spirit and purpose this convention followed the pattern set by the two previous ones. By resolution it declared its purpose to be:

"To bring the Lutheran Churches and organizations of the world into an enduring and intimate relationship with one another, in order to promote oneness of faith and confession and to ward off antagonistic and hostile influences" (*LR*, p. 127). It was also decided "for the sake of continuity and efficiency of the work of the Lutheran World Convention," to create the office of an executive secretary (*LR*, p. 127).

The reference to "antagonistic and hostile influences" has a double background, that of the situation in the German Reich in 1935 and that of the Barmen Declaration, 1934. The pressure under which the Church, regardless of denomination, existed in Germany is too well known to need discussion and recollection. However, the part that the Barmen Declaration played in combating Hitlerism and also in awakening a greater Lutheran solidarity in Germany and in the Lutheran World Convention will be briefly characterized.⁴

Of the Barmen Declaration it has been said: "The 'Confessional Union' proposed by (Karl) Barth is comprehended in the 'Bekennende Kirche' — the 'Confessing Church' — as it is called by the Barthians. 'Good Lutherans' and 'good Reformed' dwell in boundaries that have been declared to be no more than distinctions between theological schools. But who are these 'good' Lutherans and 'good' Reformed people? As circumstances have revealed, they are those Reformed and Lutheran Christians who are Barthians or who have at least accepted the theological Declaration of Barmen, proposed and largely prepared by Barth for a common testimony of Lutherans and Reformed against the heresies of our day — that is, prepared for a new Confession to express agreement between the two communions. In the Confessing Church of Old Prussia the *Confessio Barmensis* has already been set alongside the former Confessions as an obligatory Confession for Lutherans and Reformed who are candidates for ordination. In these circles only those are considered 'good' Lutherans (that is, orthodox Lutherans) who have accepted the Barmen Declaration as a Confession and who expound the Augsburg Confession in accordance with it. The attempt to unite the 'good' Lutherans and Reformed has consequently ended by transforming ecclesiastical boundaries into school boundaries and by asserting that the boundaries between theological schools are boundaries between Churches. . . . The Confessing Church, with its Barmen Confession, in behalf of which Barth has already demanded ecumenical recognition, has become a new Church, a Church which must be repudiated as a sect by

⁴ Cp. Edmund Schlink, in his essay on the doctrine of the church in Lutheran Churches in Germany in *The Nature of the Church*, preparatory volume for Faith and Order at Lund, 1952, p. 54.

the Reformed Church as well as by the Lutheran. . . . The Confessing Church is already reflecting the characteristics of a society of enthusiasts. The claim has already been advanced that the Barmen Confession was inspired by the Holy Spirit and is consequently the Word of God."⁵

In Paris the Lutheran World Convention adopted a resolution which stressed confessional integrity and identity. This emphasis was a sign of things to come, as shall be showed later. However, while emphasizing Lutheran solidarity, the Lutheran World Convention, through its executive committee, in 1936 drew up propositions for presentation to the contemplated Philadelphia Assembly in 1940, which emphasized the continuation of Lutheran ecumenicity. They are given here as part of the pre-Lund 1947 development.

"The Lutheran Church Ecumenical in Character

"Based upon prophetic and apostolic Scriptures and growing out of the elemental experiences of personal faith, the Lutheran interpretation of the Gospel is not bound to incidentals, such as polity or liturgy or type of piety. With the God-Man as its center and the universal priesthood of believers as its radius, it covers the whole range of the human family and can never be the exclusive possession of any particular race, nation, or temperament.

"The universal appeal of the Lutheran interpretation of the Gospel, the elemental quality of the Lutheran understanding of faith and the catholic breadth of the Lutheran doctrine of the Church, impart to Lutheranism an ecumenical quality that must be remembered in these days of emphasis on externals. In the truest sense Lutheranism is itself an ecumenical movement.

"Lutheran Solidarity

"The times seem to demand that the inner unity already existing among Lutherans of the world be cultivated and mobilized in Lutheran world solidarity.

⁵ *Here We Stand*, Herman Sasse, p. 168, as translated from the German *Was heisst lutherisch?* Published in 1937, it was republished by Augsburg Publishing House, 1946.

"The purpose in seeking to develop Lutheran solidarity is to help meet the difficulties that confront our Churches just now in common with all Christendom, to unite our forces in support of our Lutheran brethren who even now are suffering for their faith, and secure the co-operation of Lutherans everywhere in entering the new doors and traversing the new paths that God has recently opened to the progress of the evangelical spirit. The purpose is to help one another in preserving and sharing with all nations the treasures we possess in the Gospel of our Lord, whom we know to be the Redeemer of the world from sin.

"Ecclesiastical Relationships"

"The Lutheran Churches of the World should proceed with united front in their relations with ecumenical Christian movements, general co-operative organizations, or Christian Churches claiming universality. They should agree among themselves as to their united participation or nonparticipation" (*LR*, p. 128).

These propositions insist on an important principle which is operative in the relationship of the Lutheran World Federation to the World Council of Churches. Representation is to be on the basis of confession or denomination and not according to countries, as the original plan for the WCC provided. This principle is recognized also beyond the Lutheran Church, as the following statement will illustrate:

"One effect of the strong Lutheran consciousness has been the continued emphasis by Lutherans on the important principle of confessional representation in the World Council of Churches. In explanation of this position Dr. Franklin Clark Fry has declared: 'For us the strongest existing realities outside our individual Churches are the ties which unite us with our fellow-confessors of the Augsburg Confession. All over the world our primary Christian loyalties are not geographical but confessional.' The constitutional amendment adopted by the First Assembly of the World Council of Churches in 1948 satisfied the desires of the Lutheran World Federation. It reads: 'Seats in the Assembly shall be allocated to the member Churches by the Central Committee, due regard being given to such factors as numerical size, adequate

confessional representation, and adequate geographical distribution.'"⁶

Lutheranism's distinction from Romanism and from all non-Roman groups is thus already expressed in 1936 and declared as almost a condition for any Lutheran participation in the larger ecumenical movement.

The Philadelphia meeting was not held.⁷ The tragic involvement in World War II of almost every country where the Lutheran Church is represented to any extent at all, put a stop to all Lutheran ecumenical meetings, even as it caused the suspension of large ecumenical meetings of every kind everywhere.⁸

MEETING OF THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION, LUND, 1947

The Lutheran World Convention met once more two years after V-E and V-J days, in the university buildings and ancient cathedral at Lund, Sweden. Here it constituted itself as a Federation of Churches and Synods and asserted its identity as the largest single group of Churches formed up to that time.

The Lund Report appeared under the title of *The Proceedings of the Lutheran World Federation Assembly, Lund, Sweden, June 30—July 6, 1947*. 185 delegates from sixty-six Churches and Church federations in twenty-six countries attended. (LR, p. 98f.) They came from every continent and racial group.⁹ The global scope of the Lutheran World Federation is as great in extent as that of the World Council of Churches. Lutheranism, one of the largest non-Roman groups, through the Lutheran World Federation seeks to express the world-wide nature of its membership, its task, and its potential. Languages, peoples, and cultures of immense variety have been reached and influenced by the Gospel

⁶ *History of the Ecumenical Movement*, p. 616, quoting also the *Amsterdam Report of the First Assembly of the World Council of Churches*, p. 113, and *The Lutheran Churches of the World*, Abdel R. Wentz, p. 77.

⁷ Current (1956) plans call for an LWF meeting in Minneapolis, Minn., in 1957.

⁸ In order to summarize the ecumenical setbacks caused by such catastrophes as World War I and II, surveys should be undertaken of the effect of global wars on the church. Stewart Herman's *Report from Christian Europe* (N. Y.: Friendship Press, 1953) attempts such an assessment.

⁹ The bodies represented at Lund are listed on pp. 163—171 of the *Lund Report*.

as preached by the Lutheran Church. From Australia to China, from the Hawaiian Islands to Poland, Hungary, and beyond, from Italy to Norway and Finland, and from Argentina to Alaska, Lutheranism has driven its stakes and lengthened its cords.

How can such a heterogeneous group maintain and foster the solidarity for which it proposes to stand and to speak? To accomplish this purpose, the Lutheran World Federation adopted a constitution at Lund, which was to furnish a *modus vivendi* for so large, scattered, and polyglot an organization as that portion of the Lutheran Church banded together in the Federation. (LR, pp. 15, 19, 100, 104.)

Since the constitutional paragraphs on membership, organization, finance, and amendments to the constitution deal largely with administrative questions (LR, pp. 16—19; 101, 104; Constitution, pp. 3—10), the first three, and especially the second and third paragraphs of the LWF constitution, are those on which any judgment of membership in the LWF will be based. A comparison of the LWF constitution at those points where it speaks of its doctrinal basis and its purpose, with relevant passages in the constitutions of the Synodical Conference bodies, is of interest.

The confessional paragraph of the LWF constitution (paragraph two on Doctrinal Basis) reads: "The Lutheran World Federation acknowledges the Holy Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament as the only source and infallible norm of all church doctrine and practice, and sees in the Confessions of the Lutheran Church, especially the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and Luther's Small Catechism, a pure exposition of the Word of God."¹⁰

The confessional paragraph of the Synodical Conference reads: "The Synodical Conference accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament as the Word of God and also the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, constituting the *Book of Concord* of 1580."¹¹ In its revised form this paragraph now reads:

¹⁰ Pamphlet: *The Constitution of the Lutheran World Federation*, Lausanne, 1948, p. 1. Also LR, pp. 15, 100.

¹¹ *Doctrinal Declarations*, p. 3. This wording dates back to 1872, the year of the organization of the Synodical Conference.

"The Synodical Conference of North America accepts without reservation the canonical Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament as the verbally inspired Word of God and the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, constituting the Book of Concord of 1580, as its confession of faith."¹²

The confessional paragraph of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod reads:

"Synod, and every member of Synod, accepts without reservation:

1. The Scripture of the Old and the New Testament as the written Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and of practice;

2. All the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God, to wit, the three Ecumenical Creeds (the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Large Catechism of Luther, the Small Catechism of Luther, and the Formula of Concord."¹³

At the organization of the Wisconsin Synod in 1850 the confessional declaration was based "on Scriptures and upon the Augsburg Confession (UAC) and the other Lutheran Confessions." At their ordination candidates were to be obligated to these confessions.¹⁴

The confessional paragraph of the Wisconsin Synod today reads: "This synod accepts the canonical books of the Old and the New Testament, as the divinely inspired and inerrant Word of God, and submits to this as the only infallible authority in all matters of doctrine, faith, and life. This Synod adheres to the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church embodied in the Book of Concord of 1580, not in so far as, but because they are a correct

¹² This reworded statement was adopted in answer to the Pittsburgh Agreement between the American Lutheran Church and the United Lutheran Church of America, 1940, in which the term "verbally inspired" does not occur, but in which the Bible is described as "a complete, errorless, unbreakable whole of which Christ is the center."

¹³ Walter A. Baepfer, *A Century of Grace* (St. Louis: CPH, 1946), pp. 99f. *Handbook of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod: Constitution, Article II.*

¹⁴ *Continuing in His Word*, Milwaukee: Northwestern Publ. House, 1950, p. 15.

presentation and exposition of the pure doctrine of the Word of God."¹⁵

The confessional paragraph of the Norwegian Synod reads as follows:

"2. The only source and rule of doctrine is the Word of God as revealed in the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments

"3. The Norwegian Synod adopts as its confession all the Symbolical Books of the Lutheran Church contained in the Book of Concord."¹⁶

The confessional paragraph of the Slovak Synod says:

"The Slovak American Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in the United States of North America confesses the divinity of the Holy Scriptures (Canonical)."¹⁷

The acknowledgment of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament as the only source and infallible norm of Church doctrine and practice is characteristically Lutheran if the quoted paragraphs on doctrinal bases can serve as criteria. Remembering that this is the LWF constitution, not a "confessional document" in the sense that the Augsburg Confession and the Catechisms of Luther are, it appears that its doctrinal basis paragraph expresses a truly Lutheran standpoint. The constitution of the LWF gives its members the right to insist on a conservative and orthodox view of Scripture. Because the Holy Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament are recognized as the only source, the infallible norm of Church doctrine and practice, the LWF by its constitution guarantees the continuation in the Federation of the Biblical standard of teaching and life.

The Lutheran World Federation also sees in the Confessions of the Lutheran Church a pure exposition of the Word of God. Remembering the emphasis placed on the importance and normative nature of the confessions by the Missouri Synod in 1847 and its present-day constitution, by the Wisconsin Synod in 1850 and thereafter, by the Synodical Conference in 1872 and 1944, this same emphasis by the LWF in 1947 appears to place a case of marked similarity in confessional acceptance before us.

¹⁵ Constitution of the Ev. Luth. Jt. Synod of Wis. a. o. St., p. 2.

¹⁶ S. C. Ylvisaker, *Grace for Grace*, Mankato, 1943, p. 120.

¹⁷ Geo. Dolak, *A History of the Slovak Ev. Luth. Church*, pp. 56f.

The "purpose" paragraph of the Lutheran World Federation constitution likewise has a similarity to the purposes outlined in the constitutions of the various Lutheran Synods in the Synodical Conference and of the Synodical Conference itself. The entire paragraph reads as follows:

"Nature and Purpose

"1. The Lutheran World Federation shall be a free association of Lutheran Churches. It shall have no power to legislate for the Churches belonging to it or to interfere with their complete autonomy, but shall act as their agent in such matters as they assign to it.

"2. The purposes of the Lutheran World Federation are:

- a) To bear united witness before the world to the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the power of God for salvation;
- b) To cultivate unity of faith and confession among the Lutheran Churches of the world;
- c) To promote fellowship and co-operation in study among Lutherans;
- d) To foster Lutheran participation in ecumenical movements;
- e) To develop a united Lutheran approach to responsibilities in missions and education; and to
- f) Support Lutheran groups in need of spiritual and material aid.

"3. The Lutheran World Federation may take action on behalf of member Churches in such matters as one or more of them may commit to it." (LR, pp. 15, 16, 100, 101; Constitution, pp. 2, 3.)

With the exception of 2d almost every conservative group could — and some do — subscribe to these purposes. The reference to the ecumenical movements is a matter of time and timing. Ecumenical movements in the modern sense did not exist when the Lutheran bodies in the United States were organized. The paragraph cited below from the Missouri Synod constitution as to the renunciation of unionism and syncretism certainly was meant seriously. Still it also was always the stated purpose of Dr. Walther and other Lutheran theologians to unite at least American Lu-

theranism in one body. When the Synodical Conference was founded in 1872, this purpose was given expression in the constitutional definition of purpose and object of the Conference:

"An expression of the unity of the Spirit existing among the respective synods; mutual encouragement as to faith and confession; promotion of unity as to doctrine and practice and the removal of threatening disturbance thereof; co-operation in matters of mutual interest; and effort to establish territorial boundaries for the synods, provided that the language used does not separate them; *the uniting of all Lutheran Synods of America into one orthodox Lutheran Church.*"¹⁸ (Ital. ours.)

An important point mentioned at the time of the founding of the Synodical Conference in 1872 is already reflected in its name as a "Conference." It is not to be a superchurch but a consultative and advisory body which was to carry out such joint work as might be approved by all its member bodies. Paragraph III.1 (LR, pp. 15, 16, 100, 101) of the constitution of the LWF expresses a similar regard for the autonomy of its member groups. Because of the intercontinental character of its work, it does, however, leave the door open for a larger scope of work, if so requested. (LR, v. s.) Thus a comparison of the Lutheran World Federation constitution with the constitutional documents of the Synodical Conference and its member synods bears out a basic similarity of ideals and purpose.¹⁹

The confessional paragraphs of the American Lutheran Church (ALC), the American Lutheran Conference (ALCF), and the National Lutheran Council (NLC) are in agreement with those of the Lutheran World Federation. All the synods in these church federations of the United States were members of the Lutheran World Convention prior to the organization of the Federation.

The constitution of the Lutheran World Federation, adopted in Lund, has been in force since July 4, 1948.

¹⁸ *A Century of Grace*, p. 161. *Continuing in His Word*, p. 75. *Grace for Grace*, p. 58. The two latter accounts omit the phrase emphasized by us above, which in the 1944 Constitution of the Synodical Conference has survived thus: "To strive for true unity in doctrine and practice among Lutheran church bodies." Constitution of the Synodical Conference, p. 1.

¹⁹ Cp. Constitution of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, Art. III, 1, and VII.

The theological, missionary, and ecumenical outlook is expressed in the addresses and sermons delivered at Lund. The assembly heard two sermons, both delivered at Communion services, and eight addresses, given by nine speakers from as many countries.

Archbishop Erling Eidem of Uppsala opened the Federation meeting with a sermon and address of welcome based on Col. 3: 12-17 (LR, pp. 109—112). The reference to Lutheran ecumenicity in the sermon is largely confined to these statements concerning love, peace, and gratitude. On love he said:

"Love, which looks toward the Lord, sees in His forgiving goodness its model and guiding star, will help us to discover our responsibilities in life's personal relations as well as our duties as true Christians to the community, the nation, and to mankind." On peace:

"And this peace of Christ, given through grace and received through faith, binds us together in a communion of the heart, which goes beyond the boundaries of time and space, which removes all differences and conflicts. We are as limbs of one and the same body. That we should need one another and serve one another and give joy to one another is a requisite which God demands in His gracious calling to us who believe. The peace of Christ creates a holy catholic church." On gratitude:

"My brethren, thanksgiving befits us. It befits us particularly in these times filled with heavy and tragic memories, with spiritual and physical needs, with its uncertain and menacing outlook for the future. This is grace to be thankful for, that we may begin all in the name of our dear Lord Jesus Christ. Then all that we undertake in word and in deed cannot be without its blessing. In this blessed name we begin and continue this whole meeting for which we are now gathered."

In his opening address of welcome Archbishop Eidem more pointedly gave expression to the principle of Lutheran solidarity as well as to the wider Christian understanding which the Lutheran World Federation was to put into operation.

"Through the church inheritance which we have received in the Lutheran Reformation we belong to each other. Thus it is only right that we should be thankful and glad to experience and give expression to *our spiritual kinship*, and we must also be thankful

for the fact that side by side we can fight sin in the world, a struggle to which our Lord Jesus calls us. Naturally this must never imply any Lutheran egotism or an indifference toward our Christian sister Churches. Christ is our one Lord, and therefore we must try with all zeal to keep and deepen the unity of the spirit amongst all who confess with us the blessed Name of Christ. The Lutheran World Federation can and must promote the effort for universal Christian understanding and co-operation." (Text, 1 Peter 1:7; *LR*, pp. 112—114.)

In these words there is a clear indication of the spirit of that Lutheranism which is to be expressed in the Lutheran World Federation also in its emphasis, noticeably Scandinavian (Swedish), on ecumenicity beyond denominational boundaries.

An American point of view on the need for a federation was expressed by Dr. Ralph Long, Executive director of the National Lutheran Council, New York, in his keynote address, from which we have taken some quotations earlier. He said:

"There is (in the Lutheran Church) a diversity of organization and custom, yet there is a fundamental unity of faith which binds all constituencies into a common fellowship and comradeship" (*LR*, p. 126). He further mentioned three basic presuppositions underlying a Lutheran World Federation:

1. A Lutheran World Federation is desirable and possible and has a place and definite responsibility in the world.

2. The Lutheran Churches of the world urgently need this federated strength themselves.

3. Through a united approach Lutherans can make their best contribution to the ecumenical movement of evangelical Christianity. (*LR*, p. 126.)

Dr. Long continued to point out in his keynote address that after the paralyzing effects of World War II both the greater need and the greater difficulty of a Lutheran World Federation were seen as preparations were made for the Lund Assembly. Now that this Assembly could be achieved, he explained the meaning of the terse statements under § III in the Constitution. What he said on the purposes of the Lutheran World Federation can be summarized thus:

1. United witness before the world to the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the power of God for salvation. This stresses the "doctrine of justification by faith through the grace of God as the most important fact for the world to learn today."

2. Unity of faith—the future existence and usefulness of the Lutheran Church depends very largely upon their being knit together by a common faith rather than by a common organization.

3. Fellowship and co-operation in study among Lutherans to dispel suspicion and distrust.

4. Ecumenical responsibilities—a united approach, not a house divided against itself in its approach to the ecumenical movement. The World Council of Churches needs strong confessional groups. Those who oppose the consolidation of Churches of the same faith are not truly ecumenical. They seek by a syncretic process to amalgamate all Protestant faiths by ignoring confessional differences and thus breaking down the devotion and loyalty to confessional principles. This also applies to missions, in which field and its tremendous problems the Lutheran Churches must counsel together and not act independently of one another.

5. To give aid where needed. Not only do the weak and endangered Lutheran Churches need the encouraging help of their stronger and more favored brethren, but the obverse is also true. All are members of the body of Christ, consequently the affliction affects all. There is a reciprocal blessing in helping one another. Through the Lutheran World Federation we shall be joined not only in the fellowship of a common faith but also in the fellowship of common suffering and sympathetic understanding. Out of this fellowship will come untold blessings and benedictions to all. (*LR*, pp. 130—138.)

Dr. Long's keynote address may answer some of the questions which have been asked of the Lutheran World Federation. His evident readiness to commit the Lutheran World Federation to a confessional stand—a stand that has still greater practical significance in American Lutheranism than in European, particularly Scandinavian and German Lutheranism—parallels in some respects the numerous attempts of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

to reach the German Union and Landeskirchen in gatherings known generally as Bad Boll Conferences, 1947—1954.²⁰

The address which most clearly expresses the desire to meet and work together with the larger ecumenical movement came from the first executive secretary of the Federation, Dr. S. C. Michelfelder. He had been sent by the Lutheran Churches of the United States through the National Lutheran Council to work for the physical and spiritual care of stranded Lutherans all over Europe. Geneva was his headquarters. In carrying out his broad commission, he had to work with the still not formally organized but nevertheless functioning World Council of Churches. From this experience and against this background of working, planning, and direction, he could say:

"We have held to our (Lutheran) common confessions. We will not surrender them, now, for any temporary advantage, no matter how tempting that may be. Unity (Lutheran) must be our watchword. United in faith, hope and love." (*LR*, p. 35.)

"In the World Council of Churches the Lutheran Church must be represented confessionally, so that our birthright be not lost. This is not time for a watered-down or least-common-denominator compromise to be attempted confessionally, pretending there is unity of confession. Such a Church is only a house of sand. The success of the World Council of Churches lies in this, that it remain a council of churches — plural — with each Church body maintaining its full autonomy. Coordination and not elimination will assure life to this healthy ecumenical movement." (*LR*, p. 39.)

The policy that governs the approach of the Lutheran Churches to one another in the Lutheran World Federation and their joint approach as a federation to the rest of Christendom as represented in the World Council of Churches is also reflected in the message:

"Before the altar and pulpit our hearts have been knit together and we have sealed enduring bonds of fellowship with one-another as children of God in Christ. — The federation of the Lutheran Churches of the world has now become a reality. Based on Scriptural foundations, it has been formed in Christian faith and love.

²⁰ *The Story of Bad Boll*, F. E. Mayer, 1948; *Bad Boll*, M. F. Franzmann, 1949.

This brings to fulfilment at last a great dream that for centuries lived in the hearts of Lutheran people." (*LR*, p. 97.)

Lutheran intra- and extra-ecumenicity, as understood by the bodies participating in the Lutheran World Federation, is expressed and defined also in the sectional reports. "The Gospel is so exceedingly rich that no one section of the Church can claim to have fully and exhaustively comprehended all its wealth. One Church has grasped more of it, while another has remained on the circumference. One has grasped one aspect and another another. In this respect the Churches can learn from each other and help each other to a simpler, richer, and deeper understanding of the Gospel." (*LR*, p. 58.)

"Christ's Church on earth is divided into a multiplicity of separate Churches. The reason for this is not to be found simply in the superabundant riches of the Gospel, but also in human sin. Consequently, the prayer of the Lord, 'Ut omnes unum sint,' constitutes a call to repentance for all Churches and puts them under the vital obligation to strive for the realization of unity. No Church, however, must let itself be led by its concern for unity to surrender anything of the truth that has been entrusted to it. Therefore, our Evangelical Lutheran Church may not surrender anything of what was given to it at the Reformation, when it was brought back to the fountainhead of the Gospel, the message of Christ as our righteousness (Justification by faith alone). Such unity as our Church possesses in virtue of its obedience to the Word, and of its common Confession, finds expression in the deep inward fellowship in which the individual members are bound up with each other in the body of the Church in spite of all differences between them and of the sin that besets them. As the vine with its branches and leaves is but one vine with one common life, so is the Church with its members through whom flows the power and life of Christ. Different as they are and remain in nationality, class, and station, yet in their fellowship with Christ they are one. This fellowship is something which calls for constant renewal, yet at the same time it is something already given and constantly there." (*LR*, p. 58.)

"As an antidote for the ills, weakness, and problems of the world today, we state our profound conviction that the pathway of God for the spiritual renewal of the Church and of the world will be

marked out only by a newly aroused and passionately applied program of evangelism and stewardship" (LR, p. 63).

The important terms *evangelism* and *stewardship* are defined thus:

"Evangelism is the winning of men to Jesus Christ. Its aim is to present Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit that men shall be led, first, to accept Christ as their Savior; second to follow and serve Him as their King; and third, to put unlimited trust in Him as their Provider and Protector, in the fellowship of the Church.

"Christian stewardship is the practice of the Christian religion on the part of those who have been won for Christ. It is man's response, his total response, to God's grace. It is what he *does* as a Christian — all that he does, once he has accepted Christ as his Lord and Redeemer. It is, therefore, the complete fruitage of his total Christian experience, the fruitage by which the whole faith is tested. 'Every sound tree bears good fruit.' Matt. 7, 17." (LR, p. 63.)

After the sectional reports, the message, and the constitution had been adopted, the Federation closed its meeting. The way ahead was described by Dr. Michelfelder in the preface to the printed report:

"It is the aim of the founders of the Federation to make it an important instrument for every department of the Church, both clergy and laity; for theologians, pastors, teachers, missionaries, social workers, students, young people, Sunday schools, brotherhoods, women's societies, Luther Leagues. It is the hope that at the next meeting of the Federation in 1952 the Assembly will be the culmination of a series of international conferences of kindred groups. Before the Assembly at Lund many Churches prayed for the success of this convention. We felt the strength of these prayers every hour during the meetings. Prayers were answered. We ask you now to pray for the Federation continuously. Pray for its Executive Committee and officers. Thank God for the opportunity He has given us to serve Him. We are all workers together with Him who said, 'I will build My Church.' Soli Deo Gloria!" (LR, pp. 5, 6.)

The Lutheran World Federation was on its way.

1947—1952

As soon as the Lutheran World Federation had taken form, it began to lose its former unorganized character as a mere convention. A central office was established on the grounds of the World Council of Churches, 17 Route de Malagnou, Geneva, Switzerland. Dr. S. C. Michelfelder's work on behalf of the Churches in Europe, particularly Germany, Dr. Herman's work in behalf of refugees, the publication of information in several languages on the work and progress of the Federation, have been concentrated there and radiate from there. The office serves as an exchange point for information also with the corresponding committees of the World Council. It assists in maintaining the identity of the Lutheran World Federation over against the World Council of Churches, in which congregations and Churches of the Federation are at the same time the largest of the numerical contingents. It corresponds at least to the reasons for the origins of *Life and Work* that the Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches should be in close relationship and not work at cross purposes although each remains in its own area in the fields of theological study, welfare, and missions.

The department of theological study which was fully activated at Hannover in 1952, already began to function in preparation for this convention. It endeavors to crystallize the teaching and practice of the Lutheran Churches that hold membership in the Federation on a confessional basis. The detailed theological study documents that are included in the Hannover report were prepared under the supervision of the Geneva office of the Federation. They served as the basis of the lectures, debates, and resolutions at Hannover. The department's work is facilitated by the opening of a library in Geneva, and the appointment of a special staff member, whose express duty it is to observe, summarize, and also in some instances to encourage theological study in the various countries of the Federation's member Churches.

In the welfare area the Lutheran World Convention and the Lutheran World Federation have done an enormous amount of work since World War II on the European continent, in the Near east among the Palestinian Arabs, and in DP camps all over the world. Some of the European countries that were nearly ruined by

the war — Germany, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Russia, the Baltic lands, Norway, Denmark — were also, it is good to remember, lands which contain large, in some cases, majority populations of Lutheran people. By its participation in Lutheran World Relief The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod has contributed to the implementation of this work of mercy and rescue.

Displaced persons from the Baltic countries, from Poland, from Eastern Germany, and from a number of Balkan lands were taken under the wing of the Lutheran World Convention in a manner that gives Lutherans reason for pride of achievement for years to come. The DP camps were operated largely by UNRRA, but the religious work and the welfare work of clothing, food, and medical distribution was very much the responsibility of the Federation. Estonians, Letts, and Lithuanians, to cite only three of the most severely damaged nations, found a haven in the Federation DP offices. Hundreds of young people and families were successfully settled in Canada, the United States of America, South America, and Australia, largely through the direct supervision of Drs. Michelfelder and Herman. The spiritual need was supplied through religious services and the administration of the Sacraments. Resettlement in cities, homes, and families, always through qualified social agencies in the countries of adoption, promoted their physical welfare. Thousands of lives were not only physically and spiritually saved, but carefully rerooted in favorable surroundings and circumstances. Today persons still left in the hard core of refugees are constantly being rescreened to allow the maximum number to find new homes — homes for those whose homes are forever gone.

In the field of missions the Federation also achieved far-reaching results. It undertook on a global scale the difficult but rewarding work of caring for orphaned missions during World War II, which formerly were operated especially by German and Norwegian Churches. The Federation as such does not ordinarily operate any missions, but it assists in the relief of poor missions in emergency situations. In these circumstances it resettles Lutheran refugees from many lands in places where they can strike new roots without losing their religious identity to other groups in the struggle for economic rehabilitation; and it organizes and encourages councils

of Lutheran Churches in such widely separated regions as South Africa, South America, and Central America. In doing so, every effort is made to observe the integrity of doctrine and tradition in the groups it seeks to assist. This work is closely allied with the global-scale welfare work described above.

The Lutheran World Federation since 1947 is actively engaged in the publication of periodicals. The German *Rundschau*, edited for years by F. Ullmann, was a bimonthly review of the Lutheran scene in many lands. It often contained articles by leaders in the Federation on the theological issues that confront the Lutheran Church. In the English language a bimonthly bulletin for information accomplishes the same thing. In addition it presents the problems of the Lutheran World Federation, e. g., the inquiry from the United Ev. Luth. Church of Australia about the doctrinal soundness and care for correct teaching in the Federation, or the problem of the future of Lutheranism in so large and promising a field as Africa. The publication of a theological review called the *Lutheran World*, a quarterly journal, has now replaced the *Rundschau*, and brings theological essays and objective reports on the Federation's various projects.

Although federative work is not one of its principal fields or aims of endeavor, still the Federation assists where advice or counsel are requested. In response to such a request the Federation assisted in the forming of the Batak Church and sponsored its membership in the Lutheran World Federation. The Batak Church represents perhaps the greatest single missionary success in point of numbers as well as of Christian awareness and indigenous growth and leadership in the history of modern missions. Its formation follows years of assistance from the Berlin Gossner Mission.

The Federation can draw upon the experience in its own history or the work of such Lutheran groups as the National Lutheran Council in the United States for help in organizing councils and church federations that have as their prime aim and purpose the conservation of manpower, and funds, the presentation of a common voice that speaks for many Church groups. In this way the same purpose of such similar federated assistance is fulfilled by the Federation on a world-wide scale. Its purpose is to prevent

duplication of mission work, to give assistance in fund-raising campaigns, welfare work, and educational programs.

In 1952, five years after Lund, the Lutheran World Federation had member-churches in Germany, France, all Scandinavian lands, Finland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Rumania, India, Indonesia, China, South America, Canada, United States, and Australia.

HANNOVER 1952

The five years of the existence of the Lutheran World Federation from Lund, 1947, to Hannover, 1952, gave promise of a much different, more thorough and effective convention. In the midst of the preparations for the convention a great loss was sustained in 1951, when Dr. S. C. Michelfelder died in Chicago. His successor, Dr. Carl E. Lund-Quist, called from the post of public relations secretary of the National Lutheran Council in the United States, entered the work of heading the Geneva office in the thick of the pre-Hannover arrangements. Under his supervision the study reports, later incorporated in the printed report of Hannover, were carefully worked out. The agenda for the meeting had a pattern somewhat similar to that of the Faith and Order meeting at Lund, which was preparatory to the World Council of Churches meeting at Evanston.

The Hannover Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation was the largest meeting of Christians who consider themselves and want to be known to the world as Lutherans. The world did take notice. Press coverage from practically every country in which there is a sizable Lutheran constituency was good. Newspapers in the Scandinavian countries, Germany, and the United States, gave the Lutheran World Federation a wide span of publicity. The election of Dr. Hanns Lilje, a former prisoner under the pre-1945 German government, as president of the Federation, the presence of such European figures as Bishop Nygren of Sweden, Bishop Berggrav of Norway, and Professor Elert of Germany, and delegates from Asia, Africa, Australia, and the Americas, all helped to give Hannover an international aspect as well as an atmosphere of peace and reconciliation. Add to this that visitors from the Free churches of Europe and Australia, and from The Lutheran Church

— Missouri Synod, were present, and Hannover appears as a representative cross section of world Lutheranism.

Hannover, in Germany, July 25—August 3, 1952, was much later after the end of the war in Europe than Amsterdam, when such dramatic occurrences stirred all the attendants. But this meeting at Hannover was held in Germany, the sorely wounded, rent Germany, which had been the object of destruction of some of the very lands that sent delegates, and delegates were there from countries that had suffered under German occupation during the same period.

Following the Lund pattern of 1947, there were reports from the study groups, addresses by various men and women. From their thousands of words a certain theological pattern emerged. Resolutions were developed, especially in regard to theology, relief, and missionary work. The entire business of reporting the Hannover meeting was taken care of in the *Hannover Report*. This book is the source of the information now being given concerning this meeting.²¹

Under the general theme "The Living Word in a Responsible Church" bishops, theological professors, and executive secretaries presented lengthy reports and essays on the theological, missionary, welfare, and personal relations work carried on by the Lutheran World Federation since Lund. Some of these deserve review.

"The central message of the Gospel—forgiveness of sins for the sake of Christ—formed the basis of all our deliberations." Section I on Theology and Bishop Nygren's lecture on the Assembly theme dealt with this central topic of the Lutheran Reformation. "The unique testimony of the Reformation was in its proclamation that sinners are justified by grace alone. Therein the Church of the Reformation heard that Word which God Himself had spoken in Jesus Christ as the only means of saving a lost world. By this same Word, moreover, the Church lives in any age. With this Word even the Church today brings new life to a world that is lost. . . . That in Jesus Christ alone the world has found a salva-

²¹ *Proceedings of the LWF Assembly, Hannover, Germany*, Geneva: LWF, 1952, p. 7, hereafter referred to as HR.

tion from the power of sin and death and thereby a new life of righteousness before God—that is the meaning of the Reformation's testimony concerning justification by faith alone. Justification means that God in Jesus Christ graciously forgives the sinner whom He had sentenced to death. Faith means trust in and submission to this forgiving Word of God in Jesus Christ." (*HR*, p. 117.)

The Report on Theology of Section I, as reflected in the idea of a "responsible Church," uses the term "responsible" not only in the sense of assuming responsibility, but responsible in the sense of responding, of answering, confessing, and witnessing over against the world.

"Above all the 'Word' means the Incarnation. 'Scripture is inspired' of God means that as a whole Scripture bears witness of a mystery which man's eyes cannot perceive and man's mind cannot comprehend, namely, the mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God, a mystery which God Himself can disclose through the witness of His Holy Spirit. 1 Cor. 2:7-10. In proclaiming the message of the Bible as the Word of life, the Church worships the mystery of the Incarnation, while the Cross and Resurrection of Jesus Christ are looked upon as the climax and triumph in the life of the incarnate Word. The life which the Word, the living Word gives, is the life of faith, through the Word, through Baptism, nourished through growth in the Word and Holy Communion, finding its consummation in eternal life, after the ministry of faith and love have merged in the ministry of hope that is performed through preaching and prayer." (*HR*, p. 119.)

As both the introduction to the entire report volume and this section as well states, there is no complete agreement on doctrine in all matters, nor on practice, in the Churches. The way to agreement is stated thus: to crystallize the specific problems of doctrine and practice and have the Federation, through its department of theology, give attention to the urgent need of studying and clarifying them. The problems, as stated in the report of Section I on Theology, are:

"It was quite evident during the sessions of our Section (I) that on a number of subjects there is among us neither perfect unanimity

nor sufficient clarity, even though we all recognize the authority of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions.²² Among these subjects are the following:

"How do we interpret our common doctrine that the Scriptures are the Word of God?

"How do we understand the nature and extent of the authority which we all join in ascribing to our Confessions?

"What is the relationship between Church and law?

"Is unanimity in doctrine the indispensable condition for altar fellowship (intercommunion)?

"What place should be assigned, in the worship and doctrine of our church, to the Sacraments, which we all accept, on the basis of the Bible and in harmony with the Confessions, as God's own life-giving means of grace?" (*HR*, p. 116.)

These questions, not new in any case, were recommended for study to the churches banded together in the Lutheran World Federation and to the department of theology, also because the answers to them profoundly affect the position taken by the Lutheran Churches and the Federation to the ecumenical movement of today.

As in the case of the World Council of Churches, so also in the Lutheran World Federation, working together was easier than achieving doctrinal agreement. "While the representatives of the Lutheran Churches in Section I could achieve no more than agreement on the problems that need to be studied carefully by all of us jointly, the work in the other Sections produced many far more tangible results." The sections here referred to were those on foreign missions, World Service (a new agency was created), Inner Missions, stewardship, youth, and women. The tension observable throughout the churches of the world between the faith (and order) emphasis and the life and work emphasis is found in most religious groups and is not peculiar to one ecumenical association, or even to one denomination.

In the vast area of world missions, the report summarized its findings thus: "In the situation (that in the world mission fields it

²² The lack of clarity and agreement also became apparent during the assembly sessions, where, however, the Federation did not attempt to direct the thinking of the Assembly to the point of adopting predetermined results. The leadership did not press for a larger measure of unanimity. *HR*, pp. 8, 9.

is a matter of faith and conviction that since Christ is the only Lord, His Church ought not to be divided) the Lutheran Church holds a unique and central position because Christ has always been the heart and core of its preaching. The Holy Scripture as the infallible witness of Christ has been the only basis and source of faith. The love of God, who redeemed the world by identifying Himself, through His Son, with man, has been proclaimed in purity as the real consolation for burdened consciences and lost men.

"The Lutheran Church is therefore called to use its confession in the service of all churches. This does not mean using it as a law of faith, but it does mean proclaiming it as a clear and true exposition of the Gospel truth which will invite others to confess the same Christ at their place and time and in their language. Among all the churches particularly the Lutheran Church has been entrusted with the task of witnessing to the necessity of a clear confession at all times and for all churches. The Lutheran Church itself is, therefore, under a constant obligation to make use of the confessional statements which it has received from the fathers as an unceasing inspiration for a personal confession of faith to be made by all its members, on every occasion and before all men. This can and must be the service the Lutheran Church will render to the ecumenical movements." (HR, p. 137.)

Inner missions is a term that denotes Christian social welfare work in American terminology and therefore includes the application of the Gospel to the situations in which unfortunate people find themselves, in hospitals, prisons, slums, mental hospitals, orphanages, etc. According to the report of Section III it is the Church's responsibility to urge social legislation upon the state which is designed to produce a more harmonious social order and allows every person to live his life in dignity and freedom. It will also be ready to call the state's attention to possible improvements in social legislation and public welfare work. It will protest against totalitarian ideas which emphasize that here on earth man belongs to the state and that the church has no other task save to prepare man for eternity. In such a situation the church would have to act *in statu confessionis*. (HR, p. 142.)

An important aspect was emphasized in the report of Section IV on stewardship and evangelism when this report pointed out: "It is

inadequate to define a Christian only as one who believes what Christ taught, or even as one who believes in Christ. A Christian is one who follows Christ in the obedience of faith." By that is meant that faith worketh by love, and that faith without works is dead. (*HR*, p. 149f.) The vast implications of evangelism on the parish and the national and world levels are carefully worked out in this report and emphasize the necessity that the lives of all members of the church be dedicated to the winning of souls and the extension of the Kingdom through preaching and works of love. Stewardship of the whole life and person of the Christian, not only of his money, is presented as a goal in all the churches bearing the name Lutheran.

While there were separate sections on youth and women (V and VI) reminiscent of Amsterdam, the thought was emphasized here also that the church should not be thought of as consisting of so many different categories or groups, but as a whole fellowship of believers who together give the various services and expressions of their faith where they are, and where, collectively, they can bring a Christian faith and life into the existence of the unbelievers and the unchurched.

A strong eschatological note is evident when the Federation said: "We are entrusted with the message which can save the world. How can we remain silent and withhold this message for which our fathers fought and suffered, and which God has committed to our hands! Let us be witnesses and declare the works of the Lord in every possible way until He comes. To Him be glory and honor and praise forevermore." (*HR*, p. 32.)

To bring to a close this brief survey of the way in which the goals set at Lund, in 1947, were in part achieved, and how plans were put into operation to reach them and other goals more fully and effectively, we summarize a passage from the message of Hannover to its members and the world. The dedication to the "declaration of the works of the Lord" (Ps. 118:7) is pointed to as the Lord's will and as the task to which the Churches and the federation are dedicated. The Churches of the Federation "wish to grow as a world-wide community based on the fellowship of a common faith and active in deeds of brotherly love" (*HR*, p. 31f.).

In services of worship, prayer, and communion, members of Lutheran Churches were united in what the report calls the chief strength of the Assembly. This "lay in the worship services, the morning and evening prayers, the intercessory services, and other prayer services conducted by various churches and outdoors, the confessional service, and the numerous evangelistic evening programs, and in the special events offered by the 'Lutheran Week.' . . . 8,000 persons regularly studied the Bible." (*HR*, p. 9.)

Hannover, the second of the Federation's world assemblies, was looked upon by all observers as a unique contribution of the Lutheran Churches of the world to Lutheran ecumenism and solidarity. What remains to be achieved by way of doctrinal solidarity, and there is much, must be sought by prayerful labor under obedience to the Word of God. At the same time, the large joint tasks of Lutherans throughout the world will be carried out with unabated devotion. It is doubtless safe to say: Scriptural study, an understanding attitude toward those Lutherans who for reasons of conscience have not joined the Federation, and continued work together for the expression of the faith called for by the circumstances in which the Churches of the federation find themselves, will give the Federation a purpose and an achievement that fulfills the Hannover expectations.

"A Basic History of Lutheranism in America"*

By L. W. SPITZ

Abdel Ross Wentz, the author of this book, may be regarded as the dean of historians of the Lutheran Church in America. Among the significant contributions to the history of Lutheranism in this country is his *Lutheran Church in American History*, the precursor of the present volume. His *History of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Maryland* and *The Beginnings of the German Element in York County, Pennsylvania*, have set a pattern for other historians, demonstrating the kind of work that must be done elsewhere before a final and comprehensive history of Lutheranism can be written. The same may be said for his interesting *History of the Gettysburg Theological Seminary*, parts of which every Lutheran school boy should know. How many pupils know that the famous Seminary Ridge in the Battle of Gettysburg is named after a Lutheran seminary and that the seminary was used for a hospital by the Confederate army? The marks are still there. Blood stains on books used for pillows may help one to understand why a God-fearing surgeon wrote a prayer for peace on one of the flyleaves. But to return to the author of *A Basic History*, Dr. Wentz writes with a deep love of the Lutheran Church; but he does not permit his heart to prejudice his judgment. He is a historian, aiming to maintain the objectivity of his guild as far as that is humanly possible. Every historian knows, of course, that his objectivity is conditioned to some extent by his own past and present environment.

This volume is to serve a twofold purpose. The author says: "It is intended to furnish an introduction to the history of the Lutheran Church and Lutheran people in America. In this sense it is basic. It aims not merely to present facts but also to present an interpretation of the general course of events in such a way as to prevent the reader from losing the main thread in a webbed mass of details. At the same time it is intended to point the way for the more advanced student to carry his studies into greater detail and even into lines of special research." (Page v.)

To enable the advanced student to do this, he has added a general bibliographical note, in which he discusses significant publications on the history of Lutheranism in America preceding his own works. Comments are offered on the works of Ernest L. Hazelius, Edmund Jacob Wolf, A. L. Graebner, Henry Eyster Jacobs, George J. Fritschel, J. L. Neve, and

* For another review of this volume see CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY, XXVII (January 1956), 67 f.

F. Bente — a galaxy of great Lutheran writers. The selective bibliography on each chapter of his book covers twenty-three pages of authoritative materials. The student will thank the author for sixteen additional pages in the detailed index.

Dr. Wentz does not apologize for the presence of the Lutheran Church on American soil. What he has to say of Lutherans in this country should have been read by many misguided American patriots during World War I, when some annoyed Lutheran citizens and damaged Lutheran churches. Some Americans had to be told that the German Kaiser was not a Lutheran, nor had the rulers of Prussia been Lutheran for the past three hundred years. He says: "The position of the Lutheran church in America rests upon a birthright. It is not an immigrant church that needed to be naturalized after it was transplanted from some European land. It is as old as the American nation and much older than the American republic. The Lutheran church in America is an integral and potent part of American Christianity. The people in the Lutheran churches of the land are a constituent and typical element of the American nation." (Page v.)

This birthright of the Lutheran Church in America has far-reaching implications. Church history cannot be presented in an ecclesiastical vacuum, isolated from the mundane forces about it. Dr. Wentz reminds the reader that the reciprocal relation between American culture and the American Lutheran Church can be properly understood only in the light of the historical perspective. "There is a reciprocal relation," he says, "between nationality and religion, between the political and the ecclesiastical history of a country." Inasmuch as America is more or less merely a westward extension of Europe, the history of American churches cannot be written without due notice of the religious climate of that continent as well. America has been called the melting pot of people. To some extent it has been that also of churches. Melting pots seethe with great heat. The boiling metal casts off its dross. There are times when the dross is more obvious than the pure metal. This has also been true of Lutheranism in America. The dross of doctrinal impurities at times threatened to cover and obscure the precious metal of confessional Lutheranism, but God never lost sight of the metal.

The New World came into contact with Lutheranism before anyone spoke of a Lutheran Church. Indians from Mexico were present at the Diet of Worms — Cortez's gift to an unappreciative and ungrateful king! The Huguenots massacred by the Spaniards in Florida were murdered not as Frenchmen but as Lutherans. Lutherans celebrated Christmas on the frozen shore of Hudson Bay before the Pilgrim Fathers settled at Plymouth. But permanent settlements of Lutherans in the New World are of a later date. However, when once they appear in larger numbers, they are there to stay. Thus the history of Lutheranism in the New World begins about the time when Peter Minuit bought Manhattan Island from

the Indians for the price of a couple of Indian blankets, and it extends to the present, when the Lutheran Church has grown to become the fourth-largest denomination on this continent.

If the question were asked why Germany did not establish Lutheran colonies, as Spain and France established Roman Catholic and England Puritan ones, history gives the obvious answer. The Netherlands, once a part of the Holy Roman Empire, were drenched with the blood of their martyrs. They recovered, however, and turned their eyes to the Far East and to America. Germany had her internal problems and the Turks to the southeast besides. There was a Smalcald War. The Religious Peace of Augsburg, which ended it, left Germany a divided country. The Thirty Years' War ravaged and decimated the nation.

But even before that destructive war broke out, the Dutch were on the Hudson River. Soon Lutherans came to New Amsterdam. They were neither welcomed by Peter Stuyvesant nor made to feel at home. The obstinate old governor refused to heed the pleas of the Lutherans for freedom of worship as well as the orders of his home authorities. The ruthless oppression of the Protestants by the Duke of Alba in the previous century failed to make him more considerate. Lutherans were not permitted to keep their own pastor. Not until the Roman Catholic Duke of York took over that lucrative fur-trading center at the mouth of the Hudson, now to be known as New York, did the situation of the Lutherans improve. It was a blessing that the Duke's church was a minority church in England, not very popular at the time, so that he granted privileges to other minority groups, because he hoped to have them extended to his own. History does not credit the Duke with a penchant for liberty as such.

Lutherans now had a foothold in the New World, precarious as it was. They were outnumbered by Calvinists. But the permanence of Lutheranism in the New World is symbolized by old St. Matthew's Congregation, which was founded in 1664, the year of the conquest of New Amsterdam by the Duke of York.

The bloody Battle of Lützen, so important to the Lutheran forces in the Thirty Years' War, deprived them of their great leader, King Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden. One can only speculate how Lutheranism in America would have been affected if the king had lived. The king's dream of a Swedish, that is to say Lutheran, settlement in the New World was realized six years after his heroic death, when Axel Oxenstierna established New Sweden on the Delaware. Colonies are seldom founded solely for religious reasons; frequently commercial interests are uppermost in the minds of the founders. One might contrast the motives of the Jamestown founders with those of the Plymouth colonists. Likewise individual emigrants often leave the homeland merely for a better living. The most general cause of migration to America was economic pressure in the old country. Henry C. Brokmeyer, who became influential in St. Louis politics

in the nineteenth century, put it thus in his book, *A Mechanic's Diary*: "Well, hunger brought me here, whatsoever agency it may have had in bringing other people." The type of companies that initiated colonization in the seventeenth century points to commercial interests, supported by the economic needs of the colonists. Added to this there was probably the noble purpose of spreading the culture of the homeland. The Swedes, on their part, regarded religion as a salient part of their culture; pride in their language was another. Doubtless there were God-fearing men whose concern was chiefly for the salvation of immortal souls. Thus there were those among the Swedes who were eager to keep the colonists in the true Lutheran faith and to bring that faith to the Indians. The Swedish government supplied the pastors for the American venture, even after the English had taken over the Swedish settlements; when, however, the younger generation no longer spoke Swedish, it lost interest. Whatever the cause may have been, the famous Gloria Dei and Old Swedes churches, as well as others, fell to the Protestant Episcopal Church. The Swedes often receive prominent mention as an example of defection from Lutheranism, because an entire area was absorbed by another church; one may wonder, however, how many millions of Lutherans were lost to other faiths or became unchurched because the Lutheran Church could not supply a sufficient number of pastors or failed to meet the language problem in time.

The Peace of Westphalia ended the Thirty Years' War, but not the wars of that century. The boundless ambitions of Louis XIV continued to disturb Europe for decades thereafter. Lutherans and others suffering from the depredations of war and religious oppression sought refuge and food in the New World. Proprietors looking for settlers on their land grants invited them to come over. Rosy descriptions of life in the New World were circulated to entice settlers. The influence Gottfried Duden's famous *Report* had in drawing Germans, including the Saxon pilgrims of 1839 to Missouri, is well known. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Georgia, and other colonies were the beneficiaries of numerous migrations. Lutheran indentured servants added to the number of the newcomers. Not all Lutherans remained faithful to their church, but many did. They met for public worship. Pastors arrived to serve them—some good, others not so good. Some clerical renegades from Europe, posing as Lutheran pastors, managed to deceive the people. How were congregations to tell the good from the bad? The country was sparsely settled. Congregations were small and miles apart. Roads were few and bad. It is not surprising that church membership, including all denominations, was at a low ebb at the turn of the eighteenth century.

The eighteenth century brought new problems, but also new opportunities. Pietism brought a new zeal for evangelization but also indifference to pure doctrine. This indifference was to grow into rationalism.

That was the sad state of religion in Europe; it set a pattern for America. In the New World, however, every Old World pattern was subject to various modifications. Lutheranism was exposed to the influence of its Calvinistic environment. Lutherans and Reformed, at some places on the frontier, worshiped in the same churches. Economy dictated such accommodations. Pietism was more harmful than such economy. It watered down confessional Lutheranism. Perhaps it redeemed itself, however, by sending a man to America who was there to become the patriarch of Lutheranism. August Hermann Francke of Halle chose Henry Melchior Muhlenberg to serve the Lutheran Church in America. Muhlenberg's policy was *Ecclesia plantanda*, and he planted well. Under great difficulty he began to gather Lutherans into congregations, and congregations into larger units by encouraging the formation of ministeriums. He established the first one himself. As a German, Muhlenberg might have said: "Aller Anfang ist schwer." Whether he said it or not, the fact is that the organization of the Lutheran Church in the colonies was difficult. If we remember how hard it was to unite the thirteen states into a United States after the Revolutionary War, we can understand why it was not easy to unite widely scattered ministers into a ministerium. The spirit of sectionalism, not to mention the difficulties in communication, was not confined to political areas. With regard to Lutheranism it must be remembered that Lutherans came from various countries or provinces, having different liturgies, using different hymnbooks, often being served by poorly trained pastors who got their ministerial knowledge and skills by the apprenticeship method.

Doctrinal differences and indifference imported from the mother churches in Europe did not improve matters. Differences did not disappear by migration to the New World. There were times when not much more was left of Lutheranism in some communities than the name. Even some prominent clergymen were not ready to subscribe to the Augsburg Confession. Worse than that, Unitarianism, which paganized much of New England Calvinism, also crossed the borders of the Lutheran Church, though only on a very limited scale. In view of these varied circumstances under which the Lutheran Church was planted on American soil and existed there for many years of colonial and frontier life, it is a miracle of God's grace that it not only survived but also grew both internally and externally, until today it is the third-largest Protestant Church in America. Hans Jürgen Baden correctly states: "Man kann, scharf gesagt, kein Stück Geschichte beschreiben, ohne zu berücksichtigen, dass Gott der Urheber der Geschichte ist und dass alles Geschehen in seinem Willen urständet" (*Der Sinn der Geschichte*, p. 15). Viewing God's blessing upon the Lutheran Church in America, we, too, can exclaim: "What hath God wrought!"

The founding of the Gettysburg seminary in 1826 marks an epoch in the history of the Lutheran Church in America. It presaged better times,

for it set off a chain reaction which resulted in the founding of numerous Lutheran seminaries in this country. It should also be remembered that the General Synod placed the Gettysburg seminary on the basis of subscription to the Augsburg Confession by declaring: "In this seminary shall be taught, in the German and English languages, the fundamental doctrines of the Sacred Scriptures as contained in the Augsburg Confession." If that was not enough, it was something. As a matter of fact, it was much. It was more than some Lutherans both here and abroad were willing to subscribe to. At this point one might meditate at length on the blessing the Lutheran Confessions have been for the unity of the Lutheran Church throughout the world.

A flood of immigrants pouring into this country during the second half of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth brought showers of blessing and clouds of problems to the Lutheran Church. C. F. W. Walther and his conservative Lutherans had already arrived. Of him the author says: "From 1839 to his death in 1887 the history of Missouri Lutheranism is closely identified with the story of Walther's life, and he takes his place with Muhlenberg, Schmucker, and Krauth in the quartet of the most outstanding personalities in the history of the Lutheran Church in America" (page 117). Other like-minded Lutherans were already present or soon to come. The story is too immense and too complex to be summarized in a few paragraphs. Synods—German, Swedish, Danish, Norwegian, Slovak—were founded, combined, divided, recombined with others—the boiling of the melting pot! Harsh things were said; heartbreaking actions taken. Where men of conviction differ, that will happen. Since also theologians are sinners, the truth is not always spoken in love. Hence we pray: "Kyrie eleison!" But in spite of strife, which was not confined to the Lutheran Church, the nineteenth century was a magnificent century for the Lutheran Church both at home and abroad. What building of churches, of schools, of charitable institutions! What zeal for missions!

But bigger and better things were still to come. The twentieth century has seen new miracles of Lutheran growth both in America and abroad. The Lutheran Church of richly blessed America has made use of its opportunity to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to give shelter to the homeless, and to preach the Gospel to the lost. There have been renewed efforts to unite Lutherans on the basis of the Lutheran Confessions as a true exhibition of the truth of Holy Scripture. Here, too, God has not withheld His blessings.

What about the future? Honest men will not deny that there are still serious differences in doctrine and practice dividing the Lutheran Church. God-fearing men will face these differences with courage and resolution. The power of God's Word will give them courage; the Lord's will that His people should be like-minded will strengthen their resolution to work

for unity, no matter what the odds. Their zeal will be stimulated by the conviction that God's Holy Spirit is the omnipotent God, who still works miracles today, as He did on the Day of Pentecost.

The readers of Dr. Wentz's book will not all react alike to it; they could not. The very differences among Lutherans which he depicts make it impossible. Each reader will react in accordance with his own conviction. But whatever the reader's personal reaction may be, he should thank Dr. Wentz for helping us to see and to understand some of the problems that have faced the Lutheran Church in America in the past and are facing it today. To know all will not make one condone all, but at least it will help one understand all. A sincere study of the history of the Lutheran Church in America will encourage every Lutheran to continue to pray: "Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," including in these petitions the Lord's blessing on His church; and in view of the Lord's blessing in the past such a study will move him to give thanks unto the Lord because He is good and His mercy endures forever. Dr. Wentz's book may well inspire the reader to proceed to such a study.

St. Louis, Mo

Studies on Free Texts from the Old Testament

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

EZEKIEL 2:1-5

The Text and Its Central Thought.—" . . . the most influential man that we find in the whole course of Hebrew history." So we characterize the courageous young prophet Ezekiel. It was this man whom God called to be His prophet during the dark days of captivity. For some twenty-two years he stood as the symbol of God's judgment and sympathetic love to the captives by the Chebar.

Ch. 2 grows out of the overpowering vision Ezekiel had of God in the first chapter. A number of impressions arise which serve as directives for his total ministry: 1. He is called "son of man" for the first of some eighty times in the book. The term emphasizes his personal insignificance before God. Lying prostrate before Him, he senses the tremendous gulf between the Holy and the profane, the Infinite and the finite. 2. "I send thee . . ." What distinguished Ezekiel from the others in the captivity was not a higher level of spirituality or morality but the fact that he was called. The office of prophet was conferred by God. In the awe-inspiring presence of God he can do nothing but respond. Unlike Isaiah, he does not offer himself for service. Unlike Jeremiah, he does not shrink from the task. 3. "A rebellious house." This term, used some fifteen times in the first half of the book, capsules the spiritual condition of the people. Apparently, the prophet is sent to the "nation" as a whole; yet his work centers in the exiles. He traces their rebellion back not only to the wilderness but to Egypt itself. The source of their hard hearts, he says, lies in an aversion to the truth of God. Their inability to hear and respond is not intellectual but moral and spiritual (3:5-7). 4. "Be not afraid" (v. 6). His first task was negative. He was to destroy the false hope of an early return; he was to interpret God's plan in the exile. This was not yet the time for healing. He could not speak of the nearness of salvation and the seeking shepherd until the people drew near in repentance (3:8,9).—The central thought: God speaks his saving Word to people through His called messengers.

The Day and Its Theme.—The first cycle of the Trinity season closes with this Sunday. Though it is difficult to be too precise, the general theme seems to be, as Strodach suggests, the "Invitation to the Kingdom of Grace." Historically the Propers for this day originated from the

proximity of this Sunday to the Day of St. Peter and St. Paul, June 29. Peter's cry, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord," relates well to the Ezekiel text. This is Peter's call into discipleship. The Introit reverses the cry: "Leave me not, neither forsake me." Relate the Collect — "Pour into our hearts such love toward Thee . . ." — to the "rebellious" note of the text. — Theme: "Because of His Love God Has Drawn Nigh to Us Through His Word." Service theme: "God Calls Us to Discipleship."

The Goal and Purpose of the Sermon. — God is as vitally concerned with the people of our age as He was with those of the sixth century B.C. Just as surely as God spoke to the exiles, He is speaking to our generation. The sermon is to make real this concern and Word of God to people now. The goal will be that the worshiper hear in the proclaimed Word the living Word of God for him! Remember the definition of a sermon as "a manifestation of the Incarnate Word, from the written Word, by the spoken word."

Sins to Be Diagnosed and Remedied. — Though the text is deficient in its statements of Gospel, it is strong in its descriptions of sin: "Rebellious . . . transgressed . . . impudent children . . . and stiff-hearted." It will probably be most helpful not to range about too widely in the description of sin, but to ask: What blocks are keeping my people from a more full realization that God is speaking directly to them through His Word? Probably your attack will be directed against a form of indifference, a mistaken conception of preaching or the Holy Scriptures, or a static view of faith.

Opportunities for Explicit Gospel. — The danger of using a text of this sort is that the identical sermon be preached in your Lutheran Church as in the local synagog. The text contains no explicit Gospel. The need is not simply that a final unit of Gospel passages be appended to the sermon but that the entire sermon be cast into the plan of the New Testament. We remain New Testament preachers even while using Old Testament texts. Probably the most natural introduction of Gospel would come during the description of this "full Word," which God is speaking to us. His whole plan in sending messengers to people concerns the Gospel.

Illustrations and New Testament Parallels. — Archbishop Söderblom once wrote: "The chief lesson of the Bible itself is that God is a living God and has not grown aged or less active now than in His younger days." Likewise the text provides the opportunity for interpreting the New Testament ministry as composed not of plaster saints broad-

casting messages down from the mountaintops but of men whom God chooses from the midst of people to minister to people.

Outline

God Speaks His Saving Word Through His Messengers

I. *The Word to People*

- A. God reaches out to where people are physically.
- B. God reaches out to where people are spiritually.

II. *The Word Through Messengers*

- A. God uses a man in the life situation of people (human, sinful, exile).
- B. God commissions him for his task (vision, call).
- C. God sends him His Holy Spirit.

III. *The Word from God*

- A. It is God who is speaking to people.
- B. The purpose of this Word:
 - 1. To destroy their rebellion.
 - 2. To heal and convey the Life of God.

St. Louis, Mo.

DAVID S. SCHULLER

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

PSALM 1:1-6

The Text and Its Central Thought.—The First Psalm is an introduction to the entire Psalter. In the early church it was called "the preface of the Holy Ghost." Many editions of the Bible begin numbering with Psalm 2. Its authorship is somewhat in doubt because it is not assigned to David in the title, whereas 38 of the first 41 psalms are. This psalm has a strong echo in the introduction and conclusion to the Sermon on the Mount. Lest this psalm be viewed simply as a moral discourse on nobility of character, the preacher must keep in mind that Christ is the real Interpreter of all the psalms and that this psalm can be fully appreciated only when it is viewed from the Cross.

Luther's introductory remarks to the Book of Psalms are most appropriate for Psalm 1. "... Here we find not only what one or two saints have done, but what He has done who is the head of all saints, and what the saints still do—the attitude they take toward God, toward friends and enemies, the way they conduct themselves in all dangers and sufferings."

The text is a simple and effective study of the basic differences between the attitudes and fates of believers and unbelievers. It presents no textual, grammatical, or lexicographical problems. The first verse speaks of heavenly joy which completely transcends all the ordinary experiences of pleasure. In the three verbs "stand, walk, sit" and in the three nouns "ungodly, sinners, scorners" there is a marked progression of thought, a sort of spiritual rake's progress (*Interpreter's Bible*). "To walk in the counsel of the ungodly" means to participate in the designs of those who never take God into consideration in their thinking. "To stand in the way of sinners" is to deliberately follow the moral path of those who make a habit and a profession of transgressing God's laws. "To sit in the seat of the scornful" is to join fully with the blasphemers, to become petrified in the lowest forms of godlessness. The warning is obvious. First sins, "lesser sins," lead to greater sins.

The heart of Psalm 1 is found in v. 2. Love for God's Word is not just one characteristic of the righteous man. Meditation on this Word is the thing that preserves him in his righteousness. The righteous man's delight in God's Law is more than an emotion. It leads him to work actively with the Word. In Prov. 31:13 "delight" is translated "worketh diligently." Cp. Rom. 7:22; Ps. 119:16, 46, 47. "The Law" is here to be understood in the broadest sense — of all of the Word which God has given to mankind. "Meditate" originally meant "to croon" and referred to the inarticulate sounds which a man makes when reading to himself. Constant meditation in God's Law has characterized all the saints. Cp. Joshua 1:8; Ps. 63:6; 119:15, 48, 78, 91.

V. 3 compares the righteous man to a well-watered tree. The abundant supply of water guaranteed health and fruitfulness. This is the most common Scriptural figure. Cp. Job 8:16, 17; 14:7-10; 15:32, 33; Is. 1:30; etc.

Throughout the Old and New Testaments "chaff" designates that which is absolutely worthless, which disappears without leaving a trace (Ps. 35:5; Job 21:8; Is. 5:24; Matt. 3:12; etc.).

The righteous prosper in material and spiritual affairs because the Lord "knows" their way. This is the *nosse cum affectu et effectu* of the New Testament. In Prov. 12:10 the American Translation renders it "cares."

The Day and Its Theme. — The sixth Sunday after Trinity begins the second cycle of Trinity Sundays. Particular emphasis for the day, as well as for this cycle, which runs through August 29, is "newness of life and righteousness as marks of those who are in the Kingdom

of Grace and 'alive unto God'" (Reed). This is summed up in the theme suggested for this day by the editors of this series, "Our Life in God Through Grace." The Epistle from Romans 6 presents St. Paul's tremendous argument about the newness of life which God works in us when we are baptized into Christ's death. The Gospel lesson calls for the followers of this new righteousness to forgive their brothers. The Introit emphasizes the fact that we are dependent upon God's grace for protection against temptation and for the food which we must have in order to grow in righteousness. The powerful Collect for the day includes all these thoughts within its framework. The *Parish Activities* theme for the month does not lend itself too well for treatment on this day. The text is so rich and full that time will scarcely permit the application of these principles of righteousness in the general area of world government and prayer.

The Goal and Purpose of the Sermon.—To make Christians more fully aware of their high calling in Christ Jesus and to direct them to the means of grace for the strength to meet this vocation more fully.

Sin and Its Fruits to Be Diagnosed and Remedied.—The text focuses our attention upon two basic sins of attitude. It exposes as fundamentally wrong the pale and watered-down picture of Christian righteousness which is so prevalent today. It also leads us to examine our general attitude toward the means of grace in respect to church and Communion attendance and particularly in respect to Bible study. David's description of "lively" righteousness should cause us to ask whether we are making a proper distinction between weak faith and outright indifference in our care of souls. Our text also compels us to give much closer scrutiny to the "lesser" sins, to those which fall under the heading of walking in the counsel of the ungodly. It warns us against the imitation of worldly practices in church work, against the pressure to "become realistic" in our church thinking. The text must be carefully handled to avoid teaching that this righteous life earns God's favor or that we are to be righteous because then we shall prosper. We are to be righteous for the sake of Him who has called us to be righteous and for that reason alone!

Opportunities for Explicit Gospel.—If one remembers that Christ explains the Psalms, then one would naturally treat this newness of life from the point of view of the Cross, whence it flows. St. Paul's emphasis in the Epistle on Christ as the power for the new life would also fix the listeners' attention upon the Savior. Surely our fundamental "delight" in the Word comes from its message of forgiveness.

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Illustrations.—Realization of importance of Bible study: Moses, Deut. 30:8-10; Joshua 1:6-9; Christ, Matt. 7:24-27. Futility of chaff: Alexander the Great's influence in comparison with Moses'; Hannibal's with Isaiah's; Caesar's with Ezekiel's.

Outline

Fruitful Living

Introduction: The evil, frustration, boredom, worry, which mark the lives of non-Christians and also affect those parts of our lives which do not relate to Christ. The chaff.

I. God wants us to live fruitful lives

A. Characteristics of this life:

1. Avoidance of sin (v. 1);
2. Absorption in spiritual matters (v. 2).

B. God demands this life from the members of His kingdom (v. 3).

C. God offers rich blessings to encourage us to live this life (vv. 1, 3, 6).

D. God pronounces terrible threats upon those who live otherwise (vv. 4-6).

II. God enables us to lead fruitful lives

A. Planted in Christ and through Christ.

B. Nourished by the rivers of water (vv. 2, 3). Cared for tenderly while we grow.

Conclusion: The joy of fruitful living, here in time and hereafter. Janesville, Wis.

HERBERT MAYER

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

DEUTERONOMY 32:1-9

The Text and Its Central Thought.—At the conclusion of the discourses of Moses to the people of Israel prior to his farewell, after predicting the faithlessness of the people which would corrupt them in future years, he sings a song concerning the faithfulness of God and His mercy which will follow His people even when He judges and chastens. The text introduces this song, announces God Himself as its theme, rebukes the corruption of people turning from the covenant, and pleads to remember His purpose and steadfastness. V. 1: Moses sings of matters concerning heaven and earth; he speaks of the relation of God to His people throughout the ages.—V. 2: His song is not just one of judgment and doom, but it conveys fruitfulness and will

bring growth, as dew and rain produce crops. — Vv. 3, 4: The reason for this is that Moses is going to talk about and proclaim the greatness, steadfastness, and purpose of God, and the purpose of his song is to get the people to recognize God's greatness. He is the Rock, a picture of His unchangeable nature. Cf. Ps. 18:3, 32; 19:15; 31:3, 4; etc. "All His ways are judgment." He is concerned with what His people do, and concerned that they should find the power to do His will. He is a "God of truth," literally of faithfulness (*Wahrhaftigkeit* rather than *Wahrheit*), one who brings His promises to pass and does not lapse into falsehood, holding steadily to the course of His great plan. — Vv. 5, 6: "They" are the people before Moses, who are in the covenant relation to God as His people; yet they are analyzed according to their failure. Moses distinguishes between the true Israel, His children, and those who are a spot and stain upon them, a "perverse and crooked generation." "They — the spot on them, not the children — have corrupted themselves, etc." The false Israel is thus in glaring contrast to God, who is faithful and true. And that is the horror of their action; their wrong is not just evil in itself, but is an act of ingratitude, rebellion, against the father who had redeemed them, made them, established them — purchased them from bondage, a reference to the acts of rescue defined more fully vv. 10-15. The "making" is not initial creation but the shaping of Israel as a people, followed by repeated guidance to maintain their integrity as a people. — V. 7: These acts of God the Israelites are to keep on remembering; the overlapping of generations is to hand on the story. Always they are to hold before them the work of God to them. — Vv. 8, 9: In these brief lines the whole understanding of the purpose of Israel is capsuled. "How odd of God to choose the Jews" here gets its answer: God went to much trouble, carried out a grand design, to set Israel apart from other nations; for they were to be distinctly His. Hence He gave them territory adequate to their numbers. When the nations saw Israel, they were to see God's own property. — "The great God wants His people, despite their perversity, to remain His own."

The Day and Its Theme. — The Epistle for the day stresses newness of life and its fruits; the Gospel for the day, Christ's provision even for daily bread; other Propers extol the grace and power of God to supply our needs. The *Parish Activities* theme for the month lifts out the accent on God's control of the governments of the world. The central thought of the text needs no reshaping to accord with these accents, provided that the text can be made to apply to the New Testament age as it did to the Old.

The Goal and Purpose of the Sermon.—The hearer should face the fact that God is in control of history to the end that he, together with his fellow Christians throughout the world, should carry out God's purposes; hence that any sluggishness to fulfill God's plan is folly, any commitment to God's plan needs to draw on God's own supply and to be attached to God as the One who brings His promises to pass.

Sin to Be Diagnosed and Remedied.—Vv. 5 and 6 describe rebellion against the plans of God as a corruption and perverseness. Amid the people of God people so behaving are a spot, a foiling of the purpose that God's people represent to the world the embodiment of God's business and power. That sin is also described as a horrible and foolish ingratitude to God, who is faithful and resourceful. The preaching problem is to attack sin in the heart of the Christian and not to allow the hearer to imagine that others beside himself are guilty of this folly and he is immune.

Opportunities for Explicit Gospel.—"The name of the Lord," the revelation of His saving plan, is fruit-bringing Word. God is Rock, steady, bringing His promises to pass; His ways are judgment, "He wants men to be righteous even as He is righteous" (Luther), He is the God of truth, bringing His sure Word and promise to come true; He has "bought" His people and constructs them into a body of humanity distinct from the rest; this people is His people, and He moves history to give it room and scope for its work. These facets of the text obviously have their counterpart in the fulfillment of the New Testament. The text is not to be preached merely as a type of the New Testament, but as an insight into God, who, as He kept His promises and made Israel into His people in Moses' time, is the same God, still redeeming and constructing His people into a body, leading and guiding them, responding with love even though they react to Him with ingratitude and folly of rebellion.

Illustrations and New Testament Parallels.—1 Peter 2:6-10 comes to mind irresistibly; much of the remainder of 1 Peter illuminates God's management of world and history for the sake of the witness of His people and the realization of their purpose of witness. The "rod of iron" passages of Rev. 2:27; 12:5; 19:15 remind of God's power at work in helping the church to function. Cf. Eph. 1:22, 23; Psalm 2. In God's plan the chastisements which His people incur are an even greater stimulus to the Gospel than their physical prosperity.

Outline

**The Great God Wants His People, Despite Their Perversity,
to Remain His Own (People, Your God Is Mighty!)**

Introduction: The age of science and materialism thrusts God into the unseen and unfelt. He can't be put under the electron microscope — hence He doesn't mean much. This is the source of mischief to the people who are supposed to be His, carrying out His purposes. Hence remember who He is. The purpose of Moses' song.

- I. God has made His people to be His own (mighty to buy you)
 - A. We are God's own people, set apart for Him through His act of making us, but more: buying us. Like salvaging Israel; now in Christ.
 - B. We are His own for His purposes: to be a witness to the fact that we belong to Him; to proclaim His mercy and truth.
- II. God's people tend to perversity (mighty to judge you)
 - A. Israel forgot; became idolatrous; grumbled; defiled its purpose.
 - B. We today stain our witness with quest for the material; obliviousness to God's will; retreat from the opportunities to bear witness. This is horror, folly, a demand that God judge and condemn.
- III. But God wants His people to remain His own (mighty to sustain you)
 - A. The chastisements of God are reminders that He has purposes for us and help.
 - B. God is rocklike and faithful in bringing His help to bear upon us. The interceding and governing Christ; the management of history.
 - C. Hence keep on remembering who God is and what He does. Fathers to children, Christian to Christian, help one another remember: He redeemed us; He is faithful to keep on helping us; hence let us do our task of witness in life and Word.

St. Louis, Mo.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

PSALM 119:105-112

The Text and Its Central Thought. — It has always seemed to me that the wide range of thoughts expressed in this psalm might indicate many authors, as if twenty-two children of God wanted to tell

one another what the Word of God meant to them, and chose a number to determine the order in which they would speak, and each one began each line of his eight-line description with his number (Hebrew letter).

The author of the fourteenth section describes his relationship with God's Word thus: "Your Word is a lamp for my feet, and a light for my footpath. I have sworn (that it would be so), that I would confirm (my oath) by doing it—by keeping Your righteous judgments." The author speaks of the covenant he made with God. Then the author describes briefly the influence the Word has had on Him. "I have been afflicted very severely (and I prayed), 'Lord, restore my life, according to Your Word. Please receive graciously the freewill offering of my mouth; and teach me Your decisions.'" Having committed myself into Your hands when I made my covenant with You, when You sent me trouble, I prayed: "Lord, deliver me from this trouble, as You promised to do for Your people in Your Word." Cf. Ex. 23:20-33; Lev. 26:3-13; Deut. 28:1-13. But realizing that the answer depended entirely on Your grace, I continued: "Please receive my prayer with favor, and show me Your decision." So the first use I made of the Word of God was that I let the gracious promises of that Word give me confidence to pray in time of trouble.

"My life is in my hand continually, but I have not forsaken Your instructions. Wicked ones have placed traps for me, but I did not wander away from Your statutes." Having dedicated my life to You, I still found that the decision of whether I would do right or wrong was in my hand. Cf. Deut. 30:15:20. But since I had agreed to guide my life by Your Word, I did not forget Your instructions for the guidance of my life. Therefore when the wicked tempted me, I did not wander away from Your will. So the second use I made of Your Word was to guide me through temptations.

And having received so much good from the Word, the author re-avows his allegiance to that Word: "Your counsels are my inheritance forever. Because they are the delight of my heart, I have bowed my heart to do Your statutes forever, unto the end." The revelation of Your counsel is my inheritance—I live on it, I live in it, I live by it. It is my treasure. And since Your love for me, revealed to me in Your Word (cf. Ex. 34:6, 7a) is so wonderful, I reconfirm my vow by saying, "I have inclined my heart to do Your will forever, until I die."

So the message of the author is: "I agreed to make Your Word the illumination of my life. It served me by assuring me of help in

troubles and keeping me from falling in temptations. So once more I agree to make Your Word the illumination of my life. I daily affirm my baptismal vow."

The Day and Its Theme.—Introit: "We have thought of Thy loving-kindness, and have praised Thee." Collect: Give us the mind and will to think and do what is right. Epistle: God's Spirit guides the sons of God, and when they say, "Dear Father," in prayer or, "Yes, Father," in answer to His command, the Spirit bears witness to them: "Your filial trust and obedience is your proof that you are sons and heirs of God." Gospel: Warns that if your "Dear Father" or "Yes, Father," is just a matter of words and not of the heart, you are not sons or heirs of God. So the teaching of the Propers for the day is: God's loving-kindness moves us to want to do what is right; and when we do it, we have the assurance we are the sons of God.

The text gives a distinctively Lutheran emphasis to this important lesson as it tells us that all of this depends on the Word of God. It shows us God's mercy. It tells us what is right. By it the Spirit guides and bears witness to us that we are sons of God.

Goal.—That the hearer may make God's Word his inheritance.

Sin.—Any disregard for God's Word.

Opportunities for Explicit Gospel.—The words *דָּבָר* and *עֵצָה* translated "word" and "counsel" are words used to express the idea of the total will of God; the will for man's salvation—Gospel; and the will for man's holiness—Law. That *דָּבָר* has the idea of Gospel promise here is shown in v. 107: "Restore me to life according to Your Word, that is, Your promise of grace. That *עֵצָה* has the idea of Gospel promise is clear from the context. Your revelation is my portion. Since Your message of salvation gladdens my heart, I bow to Your holy will.

New Testament Parallels.—Matt. 7:24-27: The house on the rock. James 1:17-27: Use of the Word of Truth. 1 Peter 2:1-12: Use of the milk of the Word. 2 Cor. 2:14-17: God's Word, either a "savor of life" or a "savor of death."

Outline

God's Word and I

- I. At the beginning of my Christian life, I agree to make it my all
 - A. By believing its promises.
 - B. By keeping its laws.
- II. When I do so in my Christian life, I find it helpful
 - A. It assures me of help in every need.
 - B. It keeps me from falling in time of temptation.

III. So daily I renew my vow to make God's Word my all
Introduce by a summation of the Propers.

Conclude with a summary of the New Testament passages listed above.

St. Louis, Mo.

HOLLAND H. JONES

ST. MARY MAGDALENE'S DAY

July 22

PROVERBS 31:10-31

The Text.—This passage has been called "God's guide to marital happiness, the golden scroll of woman's highest achievements in the establishment of wedded contentment" (Maier, *Lutheran Hour*, p. 254.) It has also been called "the ABC of a virtuous woman," because it is an acrostic, each verse beginning with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet in order. Because of the reference to children (v. 28), this passage, or a part of it, is often used as a text for Mother's Day sermons (e.g., *Concordia Pulpit*: 1932, p. 507; 1937, p. 448; 1948, p. 395).

V. 10. "A virtuous woman"; RSV, "a good wife." See also Ruth 3:11; Prov. 12:4. "Her price, etc.," is rendered more idiomatically in the RSV: "She is far more precious than jewels." V. 10 is the last part of the Gradual for the day. V. 11. "Safely" is not separately expressed in the Hebrew. "No need of spoil": better "no lack of gain" (RSV). V. 13. "She seeketh (i.e., applies herself to) wool, etc." "Willingly with her hands": literally, "with the delight of her hands"; RSV, "with willing hands." V. 14. "The merchants' ships" (KJV) has a misplaced apostrophe; it should be singular "merchant's." V. 15. "Meat": better, "food." "A portion": an appointed portion; here apparently of labor, i.e., a task; RSV plural "tasks" is inaccurate. V. 19. A curious inversion of words in KJV: "spindle" should read "distaff," and "distaff" should read "spindle." V. 20. "She stretcheth out (i.e., opens) her hand": gives bountifully. See the same thought in a different Hebrew word in Ps. 104:28; 145:16: "Thou openest Thine hand. . . ." V. 22. "Of tapestry" is not in the Hebrew; see also Prov. 7:16. "Silk": probably better, "linen." V. 24. "Fine linen": a wide garment made of linen, worn under the other clothes; see Judg. 14:12, 13; Is. 3:23. V. 25. "Honor": RSV, "dignity."

V. 25. "She shall rejoice in time to come": RSV, "she laughs at the time to come." Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown: "In confidence of certain maintenance." Kretzmann: "not in foolish self-confidence, but in the consciousness of having made the best possible preparations for the maintenance of herself and her household." She does not borrow

trouble by worrying about the future, for she is not afraid of it. She laughs happily, rejoicing over the good things which she anticipates and in the security which she has helped to provide, and of which she is sure in a higher sense under the providence of God. She is an optimist. And she laughs in contempt, as it were, at the evils and ills anticipated by pessimists. She knows that "of all our troubles, great or small, the greatest are those that don't happen at all!" She is not sinfully anxious about tomorrow. She fears the Lord (v.30) and cheerfully serves God, not mammon. In this she is an example of a perfect application of Matt. 6:24-34.

V.26. "In [better "on"] her tongue is the law [or: teaching, instruction, doctrine] of kindness." Hers is a soft answer, which turneth away wrath (Prov. 15:1). V.29. KJV: "daughters" is more accurate than RSV: "women." "Virtuously," RSV: "excellently," from a Hebrew word which has a rather broad background of meaning. It is translated "virtuous" or "good" in v.10. But it also refers to strength, power, might, ability; hence wealth, riches. See Gen. 34:29; Job 20:15; with עָשָׂה "to acquire wealth" (Deut. 8:17,18; Ruth 4:11). "Excel," RSV: "surpass." Note: The RSV effectively puts v.29 into quotation marks as being the husband's expression of praise. V.30. "Favor," RSV: "charm." It includes grace or gracefulness and beauty. There is something here of the popular saying: "Beauty is only skin deep." "Deceitful": literally, a lie, whatever deceives, fraud, vanity. "Vain," from a Hebrew word which refers to the breath and breathing; vapor, something vain and empty. See Eccl. 1:2. V.31. "Own" is not separately expressed in the Hebrew.

The Day and Its Theme.—July 22 is the traditional date for commemorating Mary Magdalene. The purpose of observing the day is to set her memory before us, in order that we may follow her faith and good works (AC XXI). But since neither the Epistle nor the Gospel (Luke 7:36-50), nor any of the other Propers for the day mention her by name, she enters into the picture only indirectly or by implication.

Orientation.—Mary Magdalene's name seems to indicate that her home was at Magdala in Galilee, on the northwest shore of the Sea of Tiberias. Her full name occurs in the following passages: Luke 8:2,3. Jesus had cast seven "devils" (literally, demons, evil spirits) out of her, and she was one of the women who were with Him on a tour through Galilee and who "ministered unto Him of their substance," probably in the summer and autumn of 28 A.D. John 19:25:

She was one of the women who stood by the cross of Jesus. Matt. 27:56 (Mark 15:40): She was still on the scene after Jesus died. Matt. 27:61 (Mark 15:47): She was present at the burial of Jesus. Matt. 28:1: Fahling, *Life of Christ*, p. 686, takes this to mean that late on Saturday afternoon or in the early evening Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James and Joses, ventured out for a brief glimpse of the guarded grave, and (Mark 16:1) that the two Marys were then joined by Salome, and that the three of them then purchased and prepared spices and ointment (the Sabbath ending at sundown) for the service of love which they intended to perform the following day. John 20:1, 2: Mary Magdalene was among the first at the grave of Christ on Easter morning. John mentions only her. "It seems that Mary Magdalene played the same part among the women that Peter assumed among the men" (Fahling, p. 688). She saw the stone rolled away from the door of the grave. "It was probably at this point, without going any farther and fearing the worst, that Mary Magdalene rushed back to inform Peter and John of what she had seen" (Fahling, p. 689). The other women stayed at the grave to investigate the matter more closely and later brought their own report to the disciples. The combined or collective report of all the women is referred to in Luke 24:10. The other women first saw the angels at the grave and heard their message, but Mary Magdalene was the first one to see our risen Lord, a special blessing, which Mark 16:9 pointedly connects with her earlier blessings of release from seven "devils." "When Peter and John had run to the tomb in such great haste, Mary had followed more slowly, arriving in the garden only after Peter and John had again left" (Kretzmann, *Pop. Com.*, NT, I, 522). Meanwhile the other women had also left the grave. Mary Magdalene was there alone, weeping. Then it was that she saw two angels in the grave. They spoke with her, and she gave vent to her grief. Then she turned and saw Jesus. First she failed to recognize Him. But when Jesus called her by name, doubt and sorrow fled, and her faith found spontaneous expression in the single word "Rabboni!" Jesus then sent her back to the disciples to speak to them of His ascension. (John 20:11-18.) For this reason she is called "apostola Apostolorum."

Tradition identifies her with the woman in Luke 7:36-50, the Holy Gospel for the day; but this identification has been questioned from earliest times. However, Augustine and Gregory the Great held to it and even regarded Mary Magdalene as being Mary of Bethany, the sister of Martha and Lazarus; and Chrysostom took Matt. 26:6-13 as referring to her. We have no authoritative information on the last

years of her life, concerning which traditions vary so widely that there is little point in repeating them.

Sermon Pointers. — St. Mary Magdalene's Day lends itself admirably well to emphasis on Christian womanhood. The theme and topic should be broader than in a Mother's Day sermon, since we do not know whether Mary Magdalene had children or even whether she was married. The Epistle for the day indeed speaks of a wife (Prov. 31: 11, 12, 23, 28) and mother (v. 28), but the key phrase really lies in v. 30: "A woman that feareth the Lord." The overtones, of course, sound an application to men as well as women. Luther: "Ihre Historia ist ein sehr feines Bild der christlichen Kirche. . . . Ist ein schön Bild aller, die Christum wahrhaft lieben." (Sermon on Luke 7:36ff., Erl. ed., Vol. 6.)

Sins to Be Dealt with in the Sermon. — "Here consider your station according to the Ten Commandments," whether you are a wife, mother, mistress, etc. Cf. also the Table of Duties (to wives, to parents, to employers, to widows, etc.).

Outline

Christian Womanhood

Introduction: Every saint has a "past," and every sinner has a future! Tell the story of Mary Magdalene (see Orientation above). Point out what she was saved from: seven "devils," sin, death, and hell; and what she was saved for: to live under Christ in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness. She is an example of Christian womanhood.

I. Its privileges

To be close to the Lord, as Mary Magdalene was. To remember, as she no doubt did, that you were not always a child of God, but that He made you His own, to serve Him. (V. 30.)

II. Its obligations

To reflect the fear of the Lord in every life situation, e.g., as wife, or mother, and in other household relationships (v. 15), as the case may be. To exercise love and devotion. To practice industry and Christian stewardship. (Vv. 11-20, 22, 24, 26, 27.)

III. Its joys

Peace with God (cf. Rom. 5:1, 2). Happy home life. Pleasant relations with others in general. Release from worry in a feeling of well-being and security in the hands of God. (Vv. 11, 21, 25, 28, 29.)

IV. Its rewards

The blessings of God. Honor and respect among those whose opinion is worth considering. Love, good will, and praise from others in the family. The assurance of salvation. (Vv. 10, 11, 23, 25, 28-31.)

A COLLECT FOR THE EPISTLE

O almighty God, who hast ever accepted the devoted service of Thy faithful followers and didst bestow upon them Thy manifold blessings, grant that the faith and godliness of Thy saints may encourage us to believe in Thee and love Thee and live for Thee. Unite our hearts to fear Thy name that we may rejoice in Thy salvation, through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Pitcairn, Pa.

LUTHER POELLOT

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

PROVERBS 16:1-9

The Text and Its Central Thought.—Proverbs are intended to convey a basic truth which is borne out in common experience, though this or that unusual circumstance may develop differently. Like axioms, maxims, and postulates in their respective fields, proverbs are universally accepted. Biblical proverbs, indeed, differ from all other, for they have the authority of the Holy Spirit behind them; yet in their form and structure they are like other proverbs.

In Solomon's book a series of proverbs may, or may not, have a common core significance. Often items apparently unrelated follow one after the other. For this reason a single text, though it speak the truth, may not be exhaustive, may not reckon with all possibilities.

Our text refers directly to the Lord in every verse save one. Our complete dependence on Him is emphasized, and our plans are contrasted with His ways. Certain dangers are laid bare to help us overcome the wiles of the devil. We are not to think that all lies in our own power nor that moral and spiritual considerations do not merit thought. They are to emphasize mercy, truth, and righteousness. The alternate translation of v. 1: "The preparation of the heart is in man, but the answer of the tongue is of the Lord," is more readily meaningful. In separating the warnings from the instructions of encouragement in the text we arrive at some clear and specific directions, as, for instance: Whenever we plan, we must not only seek counsel of the Lord, but realize that the outcome is entirely in His

hands (vv. 1, 9). Better than self-conceit and arrogance because of clever plans and dishonesty is the bread eaten in humility and uprightness (vv. 2, 8). He who sets before Himself the goal of pleasing the Lord may look for blessings to his soul and mind (vv. 3, 7). A particular difficulty seems to lie in v. 4 until we recall that Jesus did come because God loved the world and we realize the truth that also those who in wickedness flaunt God's mercy cannot prevent His will nor thwart His purpose. In fact, vv. 5, 6 show two alternative ways in which the truth of verse four is demonstrated.

There is a cohesive principle in these nine verses which we may state in this central thought: In all your plans, attitudes, and actions remember the Lord; His power and His plan is supreme.

The Day and Its Theme.—Both the standard Epistle, with its exhortation not to lust after evil things and its reassurance of God's sustaining power in temptation, and the standard Gospel of wise and daring planning for eternity by subordinating all other things to that end buttress our text's concern with the will of God. The service theme "Use earthly possessions for God's plan" therefore finds abundant and unified expression. Hymns emphasizing this theme are plentiful and should be thoughtfully chosen.

Goal and Purpose of the Sermon.—The subordination of self to God and with it the sacrificing or crucifying of the dominance of all material ambitions and creature comforts as the purpose of life is still the crucial problem also in our time. Some vision of the majesty of God can be gained without the cross of Christ; but it is distorted and, if seriously considered, must become the basis for terror. To show the great glory of God in Christ and call on men to line up their plans with this fact must be the goal of the sermon. In so doing specific dangers will be noted.

Sins to Be Diagnosed and Remedied.—Proverbs in Scripture almost invariably prick consciences. So practical, direct, and straightforward are their thrusts that diagnoses abound. We trust too much in cleverness and astuteness. Our self-conceit often blinds us to our small motives. Why is our trust in the great God not more real? Our hopes often rest too heavily in comfort, peace, and security for this life.

Opportunities for Explicit Gospel.—We find here no prophecy of Christ directly nor any complete presentation of the way of salvation. The manner of dealing with iniquity in v. 6, however, and the expressions "fear of the Lord" and "righteousness" should compel us to offer a fresh approach to the exposition of forgiveness in Christ.

Illustrations and New Testament Parallels.—In politics it is important that the plans and promises of a given candidate correspond to those of his party. If they do not, he cannot reconcile his candidacy with his party label. A Christian's goals and plans must correspond to those of His God for time and eternity. Compare the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer. Paul's sermon on Mars Hill is to the point (Acts 17:24ff.). It may be useful to refer to the call of Abraham as an example, since it is the Sunday school lesson for the day.

Outline

Facing Life with Confident Eyes

Introduction: One thing we miss in current literature and films is the hard-working, devout poor who are also likable. Perhaps it is because poverty is considered reprehensible under almost all circumstances in our day; perhaps it is because trust in God in adversity in an unpretentious way is never common. In any event verse eight of our text brings a needed emphasis.

- I. We must be aware of the majesty and power of God (vv. 2, 4, 5)
 - A. Too easily God becomes a useful adjunct to human convenience.
 - B. We must find ourselves in perspective to Him according to His measurement.
 - C. The kingdom, the power, and the glory are His.
- II. There is definite and glorious purpose in all God's ways (vv. 1, 9)
 - A. God's will is done. Compare Luther's explanation of the Third Petition.
 - B. His will is not arbitrary or whimsical, much less is it cruel.
 - C. God deals in righteousness and mercy.
- III. Our life achieves direction, serenity, and promise when we correspond to His purpose (vv. 3, 6, 7)
 - A. We must hold fast to what He has done for us in Jesus Christ.
 - B. We find the trust that the pattern of our life is under His eye.
 - C. Under all circumstances His promises will not fail.

Portland, Oregon

OMAR STUENKEL

THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

THE CHURCH IN KOREA

Dr. E. G. Homrighausen last year spent a Sabbatic leave of nearly five months in East and Southeast Asia, studying theological education on behalf of the Nanking Theological Seminary Foundation and the World Council of Christian Education. In *Theology Today* (January 1956) he represents firsthand reflections on some of the areas which he visited. There is much that is encouraging for Christians in his report, as the following lines from his description of South Korea indicate. He writes: "Church buildings seem to come into existence over night. People love the church; it is their home. Literally out of the rubble, out of 'nothing,' a church building is erected by the people themselves. The church provides for its widows and orphans. In Seoul a former brothel is now such a widows' home. Bible schools enroll thousands of children. . . . And many of the teachers are widows. The church provides chaplains for the army, navy, air force, and veterans rehabilitation centers. On top of an imposing hill stands the theological seminary with several hundred students on the very spot where once stood a Japanese Shinto shrine. 'Night seminaries' enroll nearly 3,000 students who are so eager to study that they come after working hours. Among the prisoners of war, 625 men volunteered for the ministry. About 500 ministers were martyred during the war. I spoke to a prayer meeting in Seoul one Wednesday evening, when over 1,500 were present. Five o'clock morning-prayer meetings and Communion services are usual. . . . The Korean church has faced the shrine issue and the Communist issue. There is no liberalism in the Korean church. What is the secret of this religious vigor? Korean Christianity has from the beginning been based on the Bible, and it has been deeply rooted in prayer." JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

THE CHURCH AND THE SECTS

In *positions luthériennes* (January 1956) André Benoit offers a fine overview of ancient and modern sects, analyzes their common characteristics, and points out how the ancient church has reacted against them. In his opinion it is the peculiarity of the sects to emphasize falsely certain aspects of the Christian faith and so to mutilate the Christian message. In sectarian areas this happened in the past, and it still happens today. Against this truncation of the Christian message

by the sects the church organized itself, planted its members on the Word of God as set forth in Scripture, and put stress on the entire Christian message. The writer says in conclusion: "In considering the situation of the ancient church, we have tried to characterize the very essence of all sects. In studying the reaction of the ancient church against the sects, we have learned how we today might respond to the sectarian offensive. But let us note well that history does not offer us solutions which we may apply mechanically; but it points out to us the directives and gives us the elements of the solution which we may use to our advantage. What, then, are we to do in view of the sects? The answer really is very simple. It is a question of being faithful to the biblical message; it is a question of centering always anew and always much better the life of the church in Scripture, which is and remains its only norm. In that case, certainly, most sects will lose their reason to exist. Naturally, there will always remain people whose curiosity is insatiable and who will look for false consolations and false hopes outside Scripture. For such we can do nothing else than to ask the Lord to lead them back to the truth."

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

THE "EVANGELICAL" CHURCHES IN ITALY AND THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION

Under the heading *Die "evangelischen" Gemeinden und das lutherische Bekenntnis*, the Rev. Erich Dahlgruen, formerly Lutheran pastor in Rome, now pastor in Florence, and since 1948 "Dean of the Ev.-Luth. Church in Italy," in the *Ev.-Luth. Kirchenzeitung* (February 1, 1956), replies to the question how the formerly good "United German-speaking congregations in the Diaspora [*die bisher gut unierte deutschsprachige Auslandsgemeinden*]" were led to discover their Lutheran soul." He first directs attention to the fact that the German congregations in Meran, Bozen, Venice, and Trieste had long since been known either as "Ev.-Luth. congregations" or as "churches of the Augsburg Confession." The other congregations in Italy, as those in Rome, Florence, Genoa-San Remo, and Naples-Sicily, were known as "Evangelical." This does not mean that these congregations were without a distinctive confession. In fact, the overwhelming majority of their members were definitely Evangelical-Lutheran as were those of the congregations mentioned above. But why, then, did the congregations not retain the general designation "Evangelical"? That designation might have been understood as though these congregations were the evangelical churches *par excellence* in Italy. Again, the designation "United church" there would be meaningless. Besides this, in Italy

the term "Lutheran Church" (*Chiesa Luterana*) has become officially known, as distinguished from the Anglican, Presbyterian, the Italian, and the French Free churches. In Rome, for example, the Lutheran Church is recognized as the only one in which the heritage of Martin Luther is preserved not only in its liturgical service but also in its use of Luther's Small Catechism. Finally, in this new period of confessionalism, in which the Lutheran and Reformed types of Protestantism reassert their peculiarities, it becomes a duty for Lutherans to present, over against Roman ceremonialism, the Lutheran forms both of doctrine and worship.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

BRIEF ITEMS FROM "RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE"

Jerusalem.—Scholars of the Hebrew University here have succeeded in unrolling and partly deciphering the so-called Lamech scroll—the last of the seven Dead Sea scrolls. The scroll was acquired for the Israeli National "Shrine of the Book" Trust last year from Metropolitan Athanasius Yeshue Samuel of the Syrian Orthodox Monastery of St. Mark here.

The Dead Sea scrolls, the oldest known Biblical manuscripts, were discovered by Bedouin shepherds in 1947 in a Judean wilderness cave near the northwestern end of the Dead Sea. Four were sold to Metropolitan Athanasius and another member of the Syrian Jacobite community in Jerusalem. Their repurchase by Israel was made possible by the American Fund for Israel Institutions and the S. D. and R. H. Gottesman Foundation of New York.

Unrolling of the Lamech scroll was extremely difficult because of its decayed condition. Carried out under the supervision of Drs. Y. Yadin and N. Avigad, it yielded four complete pages, each with 34 lines of script. In addition, there were five partly preserved pages and several more with single sentences or words. The work of deciphering is continuing, but it is already clear that the scroll is an Aramaic version of parts of the Book of Genesis, interwoven with stories and legends about the lives of the patriarchs.

New York.—A Jewish scholar said here that the famous Dead Sea scrolls are "not of great antiquity" but were written in the Middle Ages by none too literate writers "and hence have no value for Judaism or early Christianity." Dr. Solomon Zeitlin, professor of rabbinic literature at Dropsie College, Philadelphia, made this statement in a lecture at the New York Public Library.

Most Biblical scholars agree that the scrolls were written between the first century before Christ and the first century of the Christian era.

Some scholars, however, are still reserving judgment until more is known of the manuscripts discovered by Bedouin shepherds in a cave near Jericho in 1947.

Minneapolis, Minn.—The *Pro Deo et Patria* Award of the Lutheran Church was conferred on 325 Boy Scouts or Explorers during the recent observance of Scout Week, it was announced here by the National Lutheran Committee on Scouting. Recipients of the honor were members of church troops in 188 communities of 35 states and represented eight church bodies, according to the report of the Rev. Gordon C. Bergin, chairman of the awards committee.

By synodical affiliation the award winners included 129 Scouts from the United Lutheran Church in America and 49 each from The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and Augustana Lutheran Church. Also, 44 each from the American Lutheran Church and Evangelical Lutheran Church, five from the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, three from the Suomi Synod, and one from the Lutheran Free Church, while one was nonsynodical.

The American Federation of Lutheran Brotherhoods, which sponsors the National Lutheran Committee on Scouting, established the *Pro Deo et Patria* Award in 1943. It consists of a citation and medal granted by the participating church bodies to Lutheran boys who are members of a registered Scout unit in recognition of "wholehearted participation in the total program of the church." In the past twelve years, 15,806 applications have been received and 3,275 awards have been granted: 1,267 in the ULCA, 670 in the ELC, 548 in Augustana, 369 in the Missouri Synod, 367 in the ALC, 20 in the LFC, 18 in the UELC, seven in the Suomi Synod, two in the AELC, and one in the Wisconsin Synod, while six were nonsynodical.

Berlin, Germany.—Lutheran churches in East Germany face a new crisis as Communist authorities step up their antichurch propaganda, continue to undercut the church's material basis, and strive to drive wedges between East and West German church leaders by threats against those in their zone and accusations against those in the West.

According to *Christ und Welt*, West German Protestant weekly, the increased distribution of atheistic propaganda material, cutting of financial support to churches, recently renewed arrests of church workers, and constantly increasing threats uttered by Communist leaders, amount to an antichurch campaign "even more radical" than experienced in 1953 prior to the June riots in East Germany. *Christ und Welt* declared that the Communist aim is to separate East German churches from their Evangelical sister churches in the West in order

to create an independent church led by a handful of men obedient to the Communist regime. Other newspapers, including the independent West Berlin daily *Der Tagesspiegel*, seem to concur in this analysis.

Stressing that neither Bishop Dibelius nor any one of the six regional bishops residing in the East Zone "would ever join a state church the top leaders of which would be Communistic atheists," the Christian weekly went on to warn that the Reds, nonetheless, have found support for their aims among members of the East Zone Evangelical churches.

This group within the church, *Christ und Welt* maintained, is led by Dean Heinrich Gruber, representative at the Pankow government of the Evangelical Church in Germany, but described by the weekly as "one who has been refuted and isolated by pastors and congregations of the zone."

While Communist officials again openly proclaim that "religion hinders progress," Dean Gruber echoes official warning that the church "must revise its stand" and urges official subordination of East German churches to the state, *Christ und Welt* charged.

Oslo, Norway.—Norwegian authorities have refused to recognize the Mormon congregation of Oslo as a free church entitled to perform marriages and keep church registers, the *Church News* of the northern countries reported. The government's opinion that the Mormons do not constitute a free church under Norway's Dissenter Act, regulating the activities of free churches, was based on a 1954 finding by the Bishops' Assembly of the (Lutheran) State Church proclaiming that the Mormon Church "could not be considered a Christian body." The Mormons' right freely to practice their religion in Norway was in no way affected by the decision, the *Church News* said.

Cincinnati, Ohio.—Dr. Carl H. Kraeling, director of the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute, said here that Christian scholars do not fear, as some writers have maintained, that discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls may weaken the foundations of Christian faith. He told the annual meeting of the National Council of Churches' Division of Christian Education that scholars regard the scrolls as an important discovery that "gives a clearer conception of the history of the Old Testament text and a clearer picture of the total situation in which the Gospel was born." Dr. Kraeling said the scrolls "amplify current knowledge of Jewish piety, religious thought and observance in Palestine."

"They show," he said, "the devotion of most deeply pious groups and individuals to the religious heritage of Israel's past, the intensive efforts made to formulate the chief elements of that heritage, and the intensity of the belief that God would in the immediate future fulfill His promises to His people and establish His sovereignty on earth through agents of His choosing."

The scrolls indicate, the Chicago scholar said, that both Jesus and John the Baptist may have been in personal contact with the Essene sect at some time. Dr. Kraeling said scholars are sure that Jesus was "not just another Essene and Christianity is not just a variant of the Essene movement, as some authorities first speculated." He warned that scholars cannot afford to ignore the facts brought to light in the scrolls, particularly as they affect understanding of the beginnings of Christianity and interpretation of the New Testament.

Raleigh, N. C.—A proposal that the Roman Catholic Diocese of Raleigh be allowed to operate a 300-bed hospital to be built here with tax funds brought protests from Protestant groups. Resolutions opposing the move were adopted by the Religious Liberty Committee of the Raleigh Baptist Association, the Presbyterian Council of Raleigh, the Harnett County Ministerial Association, the Little River Baptist Association, and others. They all contended that such a step would violate the principle of the separation of church and state.

Bishop Vincent S. Waters of the Raleigh Diocese recently offered to donate a site for the new \$5,000,000 hospital if the county would allow a Catholic order of sisters to staff and operate it. The Wake County Commissioners have appointed a committee to look into the proposal, including its legal aspects. Last December citizens of the county approved a \$5,000,000 bond issue to finance the project, along with a special tax levy for its operations.

The Religious Liberty Committee of the Raleigh Baptist Association said that any sectarian group involved in such a project should assume responsibility for it. It noted that North Carolina Baptists in recent years turned down an offer by the Federal Government of an initial gift of \$750,000 for the construction of an addition to the Baptist Hospital at Winston-Salem because they believed there should be no public support of sectarian enterprises. The group added it was of the opinion that the voters of Raleigh and Wake County would have rejected the hospital bond issue if they had known the institution might be placed under any sectarian control.

New York.—The Appellate Division here overruled an action of the New York County Supreme Court granting a writ of habeas

corpus which would have restored to Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Hahn of Mount Vernon, N. Y., custody of their six-months-old daughter so that they could raise her as a Roman Catholic. The child, Dorothy, is living in Westport, Conn., with Larry Haines, TV-radio actor, and his wife Gertrude, to whom Mrs. Hahn signed over the baby before its birth last September. The Haines are Jewish; Mrs. Hahn is a Roman Catholic; and her husband, an Episcopalian, is taking instruction in the Roman Catholic faith.

Chicago.—Representatives of three Lutheran denominations planning to merge in 1960 as The American Lutheran Church approved Minneapolis as its headquarters city. The action was taken at a meeting here of the Joint Union Committee of the merging bodies—the American Lutheran Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Newark, N. J.—George Meany, president of the AFL-CIO, said here that the papal encyclicals have guided the American labor movement through the years. He mentioned especially *Rerum novarum*, the labor encyclical of Pope Leo XIII.

The labor leader addressed the 16th annual dinner here of the Spur Society of the School of Business Administration of St. Peter's College, Jersey City. During the dinner he was presented with the college's *Rerum novarum* award. The award is given each year to a Catholic who has "distinguished himself in the field of labor-management relations by fidelity to the principles of the social encyclical."

Boston.—Mixed marriages were condemned here by Roman Catholic family life experts as "a threat to the faith of the Catholic spouse and the religious training of the children."

A resolution adopted by the 24th annual convention of the National Catholic Conference on Family Life noted that between a third and a fourth of all valid marriages involving Catholics are mixed unions. This relatively high rate, the Conference said, poses a "particularly acute" problem in modern society "as the gap between Catholic family values and those maintained by other groups tends to widen."

The delegates said parents are obliged to instruct their children concerning the dangers of mixed marriage. Parents also were called upon to "guide and supervise the associations of their children so that they become acquainted with Catholic friends."

BOOK REVIEW

All books reviewed in this periodical may be procured from or through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 South Jefferson Avenue, St. Louis 18, Missouri.

THE KEY CONCEPTS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. By Albert Gelin.
Translated from the French by George Lamb. New York: Sheed and Ward, 1955. xiv and 94 pages. Cloth. \$2.00.

In this small book Père Albert Gelin, professor of theology in Lyons, discusses big things. In 94 pages he treats: I. The Revelation of God in the Old Testament; II. God's Design in Mankind; III. Personal Salvation. Equipped with an understanding of these basic concepts, no one can fail to have a key to the meaning of the whole Old Testament: "It was to Christ that God's secret but powerful influence led Israel" (p. xi).

The method by which the teaching of the Old Testament is forged into such a key deserves notice. It consists "in applying the characteristic principles of the historical method quite frankly to the sacred history of the Old Testament" (p. xi). Appealing for sanction for his hermeneutical principles to the papal encyclical *Divino afflante Spiritu* (September 30, 1943), the author traces the development of the key concepts from crude beginnings by "gradual purification and deepening" (p. x) to their perfection in and through our Lord, Mary being the "connecting link between the Old Testament and the New" (p. x).

What produces this progressive development? "The Old Testament is both revelation and the discovery of God. These two 'approaches' must not be thought of as separate" (p. 16). By this combination of impulses "Israel discovered the way of salvation and gave it its own particular form" (p. ix). That the sacred writers are included in Israel and therefore also owe their message to such a dual influence, which is in part revelation and in part discovery, is intimated in a number of sections of the book. It is expressly stated, for example, in such statements as: "In Ezekiel . . . the pure feeling of mystery [of God] comes across less clearly than in Isaiah, for instance, because of the excrescences imposed upon it by the author's somber and fantastic imaginative genius" (p. 30). How Gelin, writing with censorial sanction, can square such an approach, for example, with the pronouncements of the encyclical *Providentissimus Deus* of November 18, 1893, escapes this reviewer. For while the encyclical to which Gelin appeals appeared fifty years later and while it is intended to guide the modern Roman searcher of Scriptures, it does not retract such statements of the earlier papal directives as: "The books of the Old and the New Testament . . . have God for their author. . . . For, by supernatural power, He so moved them and impelled them to write—He was so present to them—that the things which He ordered, and those

only, they first rightly understood, then willed faithfully to write down, and finally expressed in apt words and infallible truth. Otherwise it could not be said that He was the author of the entire Scripture." (*Enchiridion Biblicum*, p. 110.) "For all the books which the Church receives as sacred and canonical are written wholly and entirely, with all their parts, at the dictation of the Holy Spirit" (*ibid.*, p. 109).

The translation from the French has retained the sprightly style of the original.

WALTER R. ROEHRS

THE BOOK OF ACTS IN HISTORY. By Henry J. Cadbury. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1955. 170 pages. Cloth. \$2.75.

Many a student of Acts or of the history and culture of the world in which early Christianity was cradled would gladly have paid more than the price of this book to have heard the Lowell Lectures for 1953, which now appear substantially as delivered in this attractively printed and bound little volume. The distinguished lecturer, professor emeritus of divinity at Harvard, has devoted the best part of his scholarly researches to the field covered by these lectures. He considers them as "epilegomena" to his well-known previous publications dealing with "Luke-Acts." In four chapters he shows how perfectly Acts fits into the historical environment, that fascinating amalgam of various cultures; each chapter treats successively a different stratum; the general "Oriental" substratum, then the Greek, the Roman, and the Jewish layers. A fifth lecture aims to relate Acts to the Christian setting as it appears from other available sources, and a final lecture ("Subsequent History") ventilates in a somewhat speculative manner the questions concerning the publication of Acts, its role in the development of the Canon, and the problem presented by the variations of the Western from the Neutral Text. Occasionally this reviewer raised a quizzical eyebrow or grunted a sharp dissent, especially in portions of the last two chapters. But at the same time he confesses his indebtedness especially to the first four chapters and the invaluable bibliographical notes appended to them. While Cadbury did not intend his lectures to be a contribution to apologetics, nevertheless, because of the many evidences presented confirming the accuracy of Acts, this book will find its place alongside the apologetic works of Ramsay, Chase, A. T. Robertson, Wikenhauser, and others.

V. BARTLING

THE FULNESS OF TIME. By John Marsh. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952. ix and 189 pages. Cloth. \$3.00.

Professor Marsh is a theological systematician, a philosopher, a disciple of A. E. Taylor and C. H. Dodd, a Platonist, and a Calvinist. His stimulating book is an attempt to understand what the Bible has to say to us about time, history, and eternity. As a Reformed theologian, he affirms the centrality of the Bible for his system, "but," he goes on, "it is not of value in and for itself. . . . The unique importance and value of the Bible is derived from the great and unique events it records." (Page 5.)

Biblical or theological time, he holds, is "realistic." It transcends, presupposes, and enters into "chronological" time. In the Sacred Scriptures, times "are known and distinguished not so much by their place in some temporal sequence as by their content" (p. 21). "The fundamental Biblical category" (p. 157) is fulfillment. It was in the Exodus that Israel came by its concept of time and history; from this the Old Testament prophets unfolded their conception of God's future action. In the New Testament we are in the realm of eschatological assertion; in the Christ the kingdom of God has come in the very midst of secular history. "Christians knew that they lived in a new era. They knew that the fulfillment of history already lay in the past." (Page 120.) While they were waiting amid crisis and judgment for the final assimilation of the historical process into the fulfilled time through the παρουσία (or ἀποκάλυψις) of the crucified and risen Christ, they were called upon to live full and responsible lives in history, but to walk by faith rather than by sight. The eschatological tension of the "already-but-not-yet" is thus to be resolved: "In his one and final coming to the world, [Our Lord] was incarnate, he is an abiding presence, and he is to come at the end. The Jesus of history, the Christ of experience and the Lord who is to come are not three, but one Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (Page 137.) Eternity is qualitatively different from, but positively related to, time: "The historical order is that within which the eternal has revealed itself and in which it may be entered" (p. 145).

In the course of his book the author provides some ingenious interpretations of difficult phrases and passages in the Sacred Scriptures, among them "the ends of ages" in 1 Cor. 10:11 (p. 32), Mark 2:23-28, and 1 Sam. 21:5 (pp. 82, 83), the word ἔσθως in Luke 9:31 (pp. 86-88), and the Temptation narrative (pp. 92, 93). In an appendix he examines, and takes issue with some crucial points in, Oscar Cullmann's *Christus und die Zeit*.

ARTHUR CARL PIEPKORN

HOW OUR BIBLE CAME TO US. By H. G. G. Herklots. New York: Oxford University Press, 1954. 174 pages. Cloth. \$3.50.

Papyri, palimpsests, codices; uncials, minuscules, Masoretes; diatessaron, hexapla, polyglot; Talmud, Targum, textus receptus; Reuchlin, Tischendorf, Westcott and Hort; Oxyrhynchus papyri, Geniza fragments, Dead Sea Scrolls; Septuagint, Luther's Bible, Revised Standard Version — these dot the attractive field for research and scholarship which Canon Herklots, director of religious education for the diocese of Sheffield, opens to us in this book. Here we find answers to the average reader's questions concerning the origin of our Bible. The author represents the underlying aim of his treatise in the statement: "In respect of the Bible especially, it remains true that whatever helps our understanding helps also in the long run our praying and our working" (p. 154). One measure of his

success in this endeavor is indicated by the following quotation: "Out of the thousands of variant readings in the manuscripts, none has turned up thus far that requires a revision of the Christian doctrine" (p. 141).

A short chronological table of men and events, of documents and discoveries, and a very detailed bibliography and index are of decided practical assistance to the reader.

LORENZ WUNDERLICH

DIE BASLER KIRCHE UND THEOLOGIE IM ZEITALTER DER HOCHORTHODOXIE. By Max Geiger. Zollikon-Zuerich: Evangelischer Verlag, 1952. xi and 439 pages. Cloth. Sw. Fr. 26.—

Dr. Geiger shows that the church and the theology of Basle in the years between 1650 and 1680 have definite characteristics. In more than one respect, he says, they are in a new situation which they try to meet in a new manner. During these years in all essential ecclesiastical and theological aspects a noticeable intensification and rationalizing of Calvinistic orthodoxy takes place. Rationalism is to play its role in the 18th century, but it was present in some degree already in the 17th century.

Singling out Basle for an intensive study during these years does not mean that the main developments of European Calvinism are neglected. Basle, in fact, is an interesting focal point from which to present these developments.

Going back to the 16th century in Part I, "Basilea Reformata" (pp. 3 to 55), the author tells about Myconius, Simon Sulzer, the humanistic printers, the Italian liberals, Johann Jakob Grynaeus, and the acceptance of the Second Helvetic Confession in Basle in 1644.

Part II, "Basilea Orthodoxa," is subdivided into two divisions. The first division, in seven charters, tells about the Antistes Lukas Gernler and the church in Basle in the second half of the 17th century. The second division, again in seven chapters, recounts the opposition of Johann Rudolf Wettstein to the theological developments of the period.

Lukas Gernler was the responsible leader of Basle between 1655 and 1675. He was Antistes, professor at the university, and pastor of the cathedral church. The *Syllabus controversiarum* (1662) was in part his handiwork, and he promoted it. By 1675 the *Formula Consensus* of the Swiss Reformed Churches had been drawn up and subscribed to. John Durie, the Scot unionist, had not succeeded in gaining the co-operation of Gernler.

Wettstein, the critic of the *Formula Consensus* theology, differed on the doctrines of the descent of Christ into hell, original sin, the active and passive obedience of Christ, the inspiration of Scriptures, the covenant of works, and predestination.

The subtitles of Calvinistic theology are ably discussed by Dr. Geiger. That will be the chief value of the work for the Lutheran pastor.

CARL S. MEYER

CONCERNING SIN AND GRACE. By J. W. Kildahl. Translated by B. H. J. Habel. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1954. 428 pages. Cloth. \$4.75.

This is a translation of *Synd og Naade* (published by Augsburg in 1912), sixty-three Norwegian sermons for the entire church year based on Gospel texts. The author was born in Norway in 1857, received his education in this country, and served as the third president of St. Olaf College (1889—1914), as vice-president of the United Norwegian Lutheran Church and of the merged Norwegian (now Evangelical) Lutheran Church and as professor at Luther Theological Seminary until his death in 1920.

"Kildahl," his translator tells us, "did not write these sermons in full before he entered the pulpit. After the Sunday morning services were concluded, while he was still filled with the spirit of the worship, he went home and began at once to put on paper the sermon he had preached in church. He did not leave his desk until he had completed the task. Dinner had to wait. In a few places it appears that some member of the family may have reminded him that dinner was ready and that the rest of the household hoped he would soon come to the table."

The author himself wrote in his original Foreword: "None (of these sermons) appear exactly as they were spoken from the pulpit. As a rule, a great deal more was said than has been set down on paper."

"I have had nothing new to declare, for I know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified. In the thirty years that I have been preaching the Word of God, I have tried to present, to the best of my own understanding—the old truths of sin and grace dressed in the form most suited to the demands of the times and the needs of my listeners."

Here appear the special excellences of the volume. The sermons are not too long—and thereby they are the more helpful, whether for devotional or sermon-starting reading. They are warm with a love for our Lord and for this pastor's people. Comfortingly and confidently full of the Gospel, they stand apart from many of today's printed volumes of sermons. They remain fresh and pertinent to many of the problems of today.

GEORGE W. HOYER

J. GRESHAM MACHEN: A BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR. By Ned B. Stonehouse. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1954. 520 pages. Cloth. \$4.95.

A second edition of this biographical memoir of J. Gresham Machen by a former student and colleague has already been published. Machen, who died on January 1, 1937, staunch Calvinist that he was, made enemies no less than friends. Respected for his scholarship and honored for his courage, he nevertheless could not stem the tide of Modernism in the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. The author treats in some detail the

struggle which led to the founding of Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia in 1929, the outcome of Machen's defeat in the opposition to latitudinarianism and liberalism at Princeton Theological Seminary and in his church body. This struggle gives dramatic intensity to the life of a theological professor.

Machen's writings are well known. His treatise on *The Virgin Birth of Christ* is still an important work. Other apologetic writings by him may also be read with profit.

His friend, colleague, and biographer is not concerned primarily with telling about the books Machen wrote, not even about the struggles within the church. He wants to make the story a personal one, based on a large collection of letters (thirty file drawers) and the correspondence between Machen and his mother. The author quotes copiously from this treasure of sources at his command, even if he gives only a small fraction of these sources.

Stonehouse's account is worth reading, although it is obviously written by a partisan. Machen is a man who should be known — his place in the religious history of America in the 1920's and 1930's is a secure one. His biographer has rendered his readers a service in writing this memoir.

CARL S. MEYER

BOOKS RECEIVED

(The mention of a book in this list acknowledges its receipt and does not preclude further discussion of its contents in the "Book Review" section.)

Juliana of Norwich: An Introductory Appreciation and an Interpretative Anthology. By P. Franklin Chambers. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1955. 224 pages. Cloth. \$2.75.

Epistle to the Skeptics. By David Wesley Soper. New York: Association Press, 1956. xii + 109 pages. Paper. \$2.50.

The Philosophy of the Church Fathers. Volume I: Faith, Trinity, Incarnation. By Harry Austryn Wolfson. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956. xxviii + 635 pages. Cloth. \$10.00.

You, Too, Can Win Souls: Intimate Personal Stories of Catholics Who Shared Their Faith. By John A. O'Brien. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1955. ix + 240 pages. Cloth. \$3.50.

The Masses of Holy Week and the Easter Vigil. By Godfrey L. Diekmann. Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1956. 192 pages. Paper. 35 cents.

Dialogue on Destiny. By George W. Barrett and J. V. Langmead Casseley. Greenwich: The Seabury Press, 1955. 96 pages. Cloth. \$2.25.

The Biblical Doctrine of Man in Society. By Ernest Wright. Chicago: Alec R. Allenson (London: Student Chr. Movement Press), 1954. 176 pages. Paper. 7/.

Origen: Contra Celsum. By Henry Chadwick. New York (Cambridge): Cambridge University Press, 1953. xl + 531 pages. Cloth. \$11.50.

Investing Your Life. By Waldo J. Werning. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1956. 92 pages. Paper. 75 cents.

Principles and Problems of Biblical Translation: Some Reformation Controversies and Their Background. By W. Schwarz. New York (Cambridge): Cambridge University Press, 1955. xiv + 225 pages. Cloth. \$4.75.

Tägliche Andachten (Vol. XIX, No. 139: April 14 to June 4, 1956). By Martin Naumann. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House. 64 pages. Paper. 10 cents.

Portals of Prayer (Vol. XIX, No. 139: April 14 to June 4, 1956). By Leslie Frerking, Lloyd H. Goetz, and Siegbert W. Becker. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House. 63 pages. Paper. 10 cents.

Religions of the Ancient Near East: Sumero-Akkadian Religious Texts and Ugaritic Epics, ed. by Isaac Mendelsohn. New York: The Liberal Arts Press, 1955. xxix + 284 pages. Paper, \$1.75; cloth, \$3.00.

Die römische Petrustradition in kritischer Sicht. By Karl Heussi. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1955. viii + 78 pages. Paper. DM 6.80.

Judaism: Postbiblical and Talmudic Period. By Salo W. Baron and Joseph L. Blau. New York: The Liberal Arts Press, 1954. xxvi + 245 pages. Paper, \$1.75; cloth, \$3.00.

Protestant—Catholic—Jew: An Essay in American Religious Sociology. By Will Herberg. New York: Doubleday and Company, 1955. 320 pages. Cloth. \$4.00.

The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism. By David Daube. New York: John de Graff (London: The Athlone Press), 1956. xviii + 460 pages. Cloth. \$9.00.

God and I. By Martin L. Koehneke. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1956. 55 pages. Paper. 65 cents.

Czechoslovak Protestantism Today. By Amedeo Molnar. Prague: Central Church Publishing House, 1954. 75 pages. Paper. Price not given.

Das Graduallied: Theologische und kirchenmusikalische Handreichung zum Gemeindesingen. By Otto Brodde and Christa Mueller. Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1954. 133 pages. Paper. Price not given.

The English Mediaeval Parish Church. By G. H. Cook. New York: The Macmillan Co. (London: Phoenix House), 1954. 302 pages. Cloth. \$7.50.

Confucius: His Life and Time. By Liu Wu-Chi. New York: Philosophical Library, 1955. xv + 189 pages. Cloth. \$3.75.

Science and Christian Belief. By C. A. Coulson. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1955. 127 pages. Cloth. \$2.50.

Neo-Orthodoxy: What It Is and What It Does. By Charles Caldwell Rylie. Chicago: Moody Press, 1956. 62 pages. Paper. 75 cents.

The Theology of Reinhold Niebuhr. By Hans Hofmann. Trans. Louise Pettibone Smith. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1956. v + 269 pages. Cloth. \$3.95.

The Religion of Negro Protestants. By Ruby F. Johnston. New York: Philosophical Library, 1956. xvi + 224 pages. Cloth. \$3.00.

The Seven Deadly Sins. By Billy Graham. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1955. 113 pages. Cloth. \$2.00.

Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury. By Avrom Saltman. New York: John de Graff (London: The Athlone Press), 1956. xvi + 594 pages. Cloth. \$8.00.

Greek-English Concordance to the New Testament. By J. B. Smith. Scottdale: Mennonite Publishing House, 1955. 430 pages. Cloth. \$12.75.

Freud and the Crisis of Our Culture. By Lionel Trilling. Boston: The Beacon Press, 1955. 59 pages. Cloth. \$1.00.

The Doctrine of the Church in Anglican Theology, 1547—1603. By H. F. Woodhouse. New York: The Macmillan Co. (London: Soc. Promotion Chr. Knowl.), 1954. viii + 223 pages. Cloth. 25s.

Emil Brunner's Concept of Revelation. By Paul King Jewett. London: James Clarke and Company, 1954. xi + 190 pages. Cloth. 18s.

The Patronage of Saint Michael the Archangel. By Andrew A. Bialas. Chicago: Clerics of St. Viator, 1954. xii + 163 pages. Cloth. \$2.75.

Adults Learn and Like It: How to Teach Adults in the Church. By Irene Smith Caldwell. Anderson: The Warner Press, 1955. 112 pages. Cloth. 75 cents.

When Jesus Was Twelve. By Morella Mensing. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1956. 15 pages. Paper. 25 cents.

Novum Testamentum: An International Quarterly for New Testament and Related Studies Based on International Cooperation, ed. J. de Zwaan and J. W. Doeve. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1956. Ca. 320 pages a volume. 26 guilders per annum.

Old Priest and New Presbyterian. By Norman Sykes. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1956. viii + 266 pages. Cloth. \$5.00.

Magic with a Message: The Gospel Visualized. By David Hoy. Westwood: Fleming H. Revell, 1956. 72 pages. Plastic binder. \$1.00.

The Birth of Modern Education: The Contribution of the Dissenting Academies, 1660—1800. By J. W. Ashley Smith. Chicago: Alec R. Allenson (London: Independent Press), 1954. xii + 329 pages. Cloth. \$4.00.

Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma. By Ludwig Ott; trans. Patrick Lynch and James Bastible. St. Louis: B. Herder Book Company, 1954. xvi + 519 pages. Cloth. \$7.50.

Märtyrer und Gottesknecht: Untersuchungen zur urchristlichen Verkündigung vom Sühntod Jesu Christi. By Eduard Lohse. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1955. 219 pages. Paper. DM 16.50.

The Kantian Thing-in-Itself or The Creative Mind. By Oscar W. Miller. New York: Philosophical Library, 1956. xix + 142 pages. Cloth. \$3.75.

Epicurus and His Gods. By A. J. Festugière. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1955. xiii + 100 pages. Cloth. 9/6.

Conquering the Seven Deadly Sins. By Lance Webb. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1955. 224 pages. Cloth. \$3.00.

Thomas Cranmer, Theologian. By G. W. Bromiley. New York: Oxford University Press, 1956. xxviii + 108 pages. Cloth. \$3.25.

Der junge Wesley als Heidenmissionar und Missionstheologe. By Martin Schmidt. Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann Verlag, 1955. 48 pages. Paper. DM 4.80.

Das Passafest der Quartadecimaner. By Bernhard Lohse. Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann Verlag, 1953. 148 pages. Paper. DM 14.—.

The Christian Character. By Stephen Neill. New York: Association Press, 1955. 92 pages. Cloth. \$1.25.

Evangelischer Gottesdienst heute. By Alfred Nibergall. Kassel: Johannes Stauda Verlag, 1953. 32 pages. Paper. DM 1.80.

Lutherstudien. By Emanuel Hirsch. Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann Verlag, 1954. Cloth. Vol. I, 232 pages; Vol. II, 276 pages. DM 25.— per volume.

Church of South India: The Movement Towards Union, 1900—1947. By Bengt Sundkler. Greenwich: The Seabury Press, 1954. 457 pages. Cloth. \$6.75.

History and the Social Web: A Collection of Essays. By August C. Krey. Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1955. 269 pages. Cloth. \$4.00.

An Introduction to the Study of New Testament Greek. By James Hope Moulton. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1956. xvii + 211 pages. Cloth. \$2.50.

The Meaning of the Monastic Life. By Louis Bouyer. New York: P. J. Kenedy and Sons, 1955. x + 209 pages. Cloth. \$4.00.

Demythologizing and History (Entmythologisierung und Kirche). By Friedrich Gogarten, trans. Neville Horton Smith. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955. 92 pages. Cloth. \$2.50.

The English Church in the Fourteenth Century. By W. A. Pantin. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1955. xii + 293 pages. Cloth. \$5.00.

Reinhold Niebuhr: His Religious, Social, and Political Thought, ed. by Charles W. Kegley and Robert W. Bretall. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1956. xiv + 486 pages. Cloth. \$6.50.

A More Excellent Way: A Handbook for Church Women. By Ruth Nothstein. Rock Island: Augustana Book Concern, 1955. 112 pages. Paper. \$1.00.

Saints and Their Attributes: With a Guide to Localities and Patronage. By Helen Roeder. Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1956. xxviii + 391 pages. Cloth. \$3.75.